SCOTTISH JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY

Volume Four 1951

SCOTTISH JOURNAL

of

THEOLOGY

Volume Four

1951

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LONDON: 98 GREAT RUSSELL STREET, W.C.

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v.4
1957

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN FOR THE PUBLISHERS
BY ROBERT CUNNINGHAM AND SONS LTD., ALVA

THE CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF TIME

by The Rev. Professor EMIL BRUNNER

The Christian understanding of time is characterised by an event which is the very centre of the Christian message, and of which it is said that it happened once and for all. This *ephapax* is evidently an essential part of the theology of St. Paul and of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The Christian conceives of time like everything else from this centre, i.e. from Jesus Christ, and therefore it is from this centre that our reflection upon the essence of time has to start. This must be stated explicitly because another point of departure has been suggested by traditional theology. Certainly it was an act of great intuition on the part of St. Augustine when in his *Confessions* he dared, for the first time in history, to put forward the idea that the world was neither timeless and eternal, nor created at a certain point in the time-series, but that the world and time were created together. Therefore if the world and time have the same beginning in creation, it becomes meaningless to ask what God did before the creation of the world. The whole *schema* of before and after, the framework of time, cannot be regarded as existing before creation, but as coming into being with creation, itself a temporal fact. We can hardly overestimate the depth of this audacious idea and cannot but wonder at the genius of the thinker who fifteen hundred years ago anticipated the most recent results of astro-physics which followed from Einstein's theory of relativity on the one hand and Planck's quantum-physics on the other hand. In Augustine's mind this idea that time is co-extensive with the world was an intuition gained not from scientific data but from his Christian faith. It followed from the fact that he took in earnest the centre of the Christian message—the unique event of the revelation and reconciliation of God in Jesus Christ. That is why we have to start with this and not with Augustine's idea of creation.

Others besides Christians talk about once-and-for-all or unique events. Every good historian (that is to say, every historian who knows what history is as distinguished from nature)

understands his proper object, the historical event, to be more or less unique. The processes of nature as they appear to us all have a cyclic character—day and night, summer and winter, life and death—and are therefore characterised by recurrence and repetition. Historical facts, however, and particularly eminent historical events, are not characterised by a cyclic but by a forward-moving pattern. In mathematical terms, they may be described by a straight line rather than by a curve returning to its starting point. Historical events are unique even if they have some resemblance to each other. Many parallels may be drawn between the lives of Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar and Napoleon, and yet each of them is unique not only by his character but also by the circumstances of the epoch in which he lived and by the factors which determined his actions. What is true of these great figures and events, is true of all historical life.

True as this may be, I want to make two remarks about such a characterisation of historical events. First of all, this conception of history is not self-evident. In our age when natural science is predominant over historical thinking the tendency of historians seems to be rather the opposite. Like scientists they tend to state historical laws, parallels, and analogies, and therefore to emphasise the element of regularity in historical phenomena rather than that of uniqueness. We recall also that this idea of uniqueness or onceness in history was not present in antiquity which on the whole was dominated not by the historical but by quite a different way of thinking, the cosmological and mythical. The guiding idea was not the straight line but the circle of ever-recurring nature-processes. If we remember that one of the most powerful thinkers of modern times, who was a historian by profession, Frederick Nietzsche, believed that he had found the secret of the world in the idea of eternal recurrence (which for him included history), we become aware of the fact that the idea of uniqueness in history is in itself historical. That suggests to us that this conception of history as that which concerns unique events is itself of Christian origin.

In the second place, I want to point to the fact that historical events in general, taken by themselves, are unique only in a very relative sense. That is why it is possible to apply to

history the ideas of regularity, repetition, law and so on, although with perhaps less success than in the field of nature. At any rate it is true *also* that there are regularities, similarities, parallels in history which we cannot ignore any more than uniqueness. What we generally call history, is, to put it crudely, a mixture of uniqueness and regularity. That is to say, history is the field of relative uniqueness, but never of absolute onceness. It belongs to the structure of creaturely being that it is always both generic and individual. If in the realm of history, as distinguished from nature, the element of uniqueness prevails, it is because here human personality enters the scene, and with it something which nature does not know: *decision.* It is to this element that the good historian will give particular attention. History is the field of decisions—that is its distinction from nature and that is the reason why uniqueness or onceness plays such a significant part.

These decisions, however, are very different in kind, and have different degrees of uniqueness. The marriage of a young couple is doubtless an important decision for both parties, but for the historian it is just one of those everyday banalities which happen thousands, even millions of times (apart of course from specially important marriages such as that which united the house of Hapsburg with the house of Aragon). They may be mentioned by the family-chronicler, but not by the historian. On the other hand we speak of a primary historical event which has far-reaching circumstances, such as the conquest of Asia by Alexander, or the break-down of the feudal system through the French Revolution. Such events are unique and decisive in a much higher degree than ordinary events. But even they are only relatively unique. In a vast historical perspective, as in Professor Toynbee's monumental work, even these colossal events of the most decisive character lose much of their unique character, for they are similar to events in other epochs or in other civilisations. This relativity seems to belong to the very essence of history, as of every creaturely human being.

It is quite understandable, therefore, that secular historical thought is scandalised at the Christian message that in Jesus Christ something has happened which is absolutely decisive for all time and for all men. Such an Absolute within the relativity of history would mean the breaking of historical continuity and

indeed the disruption of the framework of history. Historical continuity excludes absolute onceness, because continuity presupposes relativity. By speaking in such terms the secular historian or philosopher becomes an unwilling witness to the Christian faith, for it is just this disruption of the historical *continuum* which is the content of the Gospel. That this disruption of the framework of history took place in the midst of the relativity of history, without at the same time destroying empirical historical continuity, is precisely what the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel asserts in the words: "The Word became flesh." It belongs to the Incarnation of the Word that He entered into the relativity and non-uniqueness of history. But that the *divine Word* actually became flesh means that this event, which empirically belongs to the relativity of history and which empirically is unique only in a relative sense, is yet absolutely decisive and absolutely unique. The "flesh" can be seen by everybody; the so-called Jesus of history is an object of secular historical research, like Julius Caesar. He is part of the historical *continuum*. But the *Logos*, the Son of God, cannot be seen except by those to whom it is given by faith. It is only for the believer, for the Christian historian, that Jesus of Nazareth can be seen as the Son of God, the Saviour, and that His cross is not merely the death of a martyr for the truth, like the death of Socrates, but God's redeeming work for all mankind, and therefore the turning-point in all history.

If Jesus is the One to whom the New Testament bears witness, and if what He has accomplished by His life, suffering, and death is what the Apostles say it is, then Jesus is Unique in the absolute sense and His work is the once-and-for-all and absolutely decisive event. Either redemption never happens, or it happens but once and cannot be repeated. As the Apostles say, it is ἐφ' ἅπαξ. That Jesus and His work are what the New Testament says, only faith knows to be the truth, but in this very faith man is given to participate in the unique. In this faith man's existence, inasmuch as it is existence in Christ and with Him, becomes new. The character of his temporal existence undergoes a fundamental change—and "fundamental" in this context is to be understood in the strictest sense. In every man's life there are events which change its character to a considerable degree. There are perhaps two or three such events

of which he would say: This has changed my life completely and given it a new meaning. But strictly speaking this is not true, because all these changes lie within the plane of relativity. Even such changes as marriage, loss of all fortune, complete change in external circumstances, or even a new outlook on life, all fail to alter the main fact: that man is a sinner and that he must die. Through faith in Jesus Christ it is just these two things which are changed: before God I am no longer a sinner but a saint; I shall not die but live with Christ eternally. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." That word of St. Paul is distinguished from all similar expressions by the fact that it is to be understood not in a relative but in an absolute sense.

We must now ask how from this point of view the problem of time and temporality presents itself. That is a question for endless discussion which no book, much less a lecture, could ever exhaust. All I can do here is to give a few hints or a few thoughts taken almost at random out of an inexhaustible fulness.

In the first place, faith in Jesus Christ gives to history an end or a goal—that applies to the history of the individual as well as to the history of humanity. It is impossible to believe in Jesus Christ without believing in that end, and an actual end at that, not some merely ideal construction, a point in the infinite distance like that in which parallels meet. It is in this latter asymptotic sense that the idealist belief in progress speaks of the infinite end of human becoming. The Christian end, however, will be reached, or rather will reach us, individually and universally, at some definite moment. That is the point at which this earthly life ceases, and eternal life begins; when with this earthly life all weakness, ambiguity, contradiction, and relativity which characterise our present existence will cease, and a completely new life without sin and death will begin. We can express this new life and its beginning only in temporal terms, indeed only in negations of temporal characteristics. It is an existence which is radically different from our temporal existence here and now, for then we shall possess the absolute and eternal which now we possess only by faith, not in its broken or paradoxical form, but in immediate vision, in the

wholeness and perfection from which all that is relative is ruled out. Time is then fulfilled, and that fulfilment is Eternal Life in communion with God and with one another in Jesus Christ.

From the point of view of Christ, however, time has not only an end but a beginning. Time belongs to the world, and the world is created in and with time. That was the grand idea of Augustine of which we have already spoken not as a speculation but as an intuition of faith derived from its recognition of the truth in the onceness of the "Christ-event". From the point of view of the "Christ-event" we can see that the world and time belong together, and, if I may speak as a child, that they are equally old. Where there is world there is time. Before creation there can be neither time nor world. Augustine here employs a notion only recently introduced again by modern physics. Time exists only where there are time-measurements, or, as Einstein used to say, where there are watches. The watches of the physicists are the stars. Where there are no stars, no chronometers, there is no time. That was the thought of St. Augustine more than fifteen hundred years before Einstein, but he conceived of it because he believed in Jesus Christ. From this angle we may answer the question, "What was there before creation?", in two ways: (1) This is a meaningless question, inasmuch as before creation there was no before and after, there was no time; or (2) "In the beginning was the Word." That is, before creation, there was the thought and will of God, not some abstract thought and will, but the personal *Logos*, the Son united with the Father. Before creation, there was God alone, the Triune God.

Time then has a beginning and an end, but the beginning is not the same as the end. Again it was Augustine who was the first Christian thinker to express this idea, though the first indication of it is found in Paul's antithesis between the First and the Last Adam. The beginning of time is the creation of the world, of this material, temporal, relative, creaturely world. The end of time, however, is the end of this world and the beginning of eternity, which is the fulfilment of the creature. It is by this sharp distinction between beginning and end that the mythological notion of endless recurrence is overcome. Pagan mythology is based on the equation of the beginning with the end. *Urzeit gleicht Endzeit.* It is just because the end

is the same as the beginning that the whole process is an eternal recurrence, an endless cyclic movement. Only when the end is different from the beginning, does history become a straight line and not a circle. Then history becomes real history. The world moves from a beginning to an end and history has an irreversible time-character. It can be spoken of as a one-way road, or described in terms of a "time-arrow" as by the physicists who derive their notion of temporal irreversibility from the second law of thermodynamics, the principle of entropy. Time is truly historical and not pseudo-historical, mythical, or natural because it is non-recurrent, linear and not circular. It is no accident, therefore, that it was only in Christianity that time and history were taken seriously and became objects for philosophical thought, while Greek philosophy gave no attention to them. It is only from the point of view of the absolutely unique that it is possible to distinguish history from nature, by seeing the essence of the historical event in the unique as opposed to the typical or the general.

In the second place, it is not only the character of world-time which is determined by belief in Jesus Christ, but also the character of the life-time of individual man. In order to understand this we may well start with two alternatives, opposed to each other. There is one conception of life according to which man "never has time", and another according to which he "always has time". The first is that of modern, Western man. His life is marked by constant unrest, by a sort of time-panic. He has no time, or never has time, because he does not know of Eternity. Because he knows only the temporal, he wants to finish everything within his own life-time. He is pursued by the fear of a closed door. "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." This is the man who is always looking at his watch, who has to have the exact radio-time and must carry his watch on his wrist, who is time-crazy, and therefore never has time. This is Western, materialistic man. His opposite number is the mystical or Eastern man. He always has time, because time for him is no reality. Eternity alone is real, and the temporal world is mere appearance. If for the Western man material temporality is everything, for the mystical Eastern man it is nothing. That is why time is worthless for him. It is unreal. Why should he bother about time when it is *maya*, illusion?

The Christian has another attitude to the world and to time. God has put man into this world, and into the time-process. He has given him both, world and time, but both in their limitation. Further, within time and within the world God has given man the Christ and thereby makes man's time the time of decision and trial. Therefore time within a Christian life is characterised by passionate tension, which stands in marked contrast to the disinterestedness of the Eastern mystic. At the same time the Christian is free from the time-panic of Western materialism, because though he lives in time the Christian has his base in Eternity. He lives in time as one who belongs to Eternity, and so he stands both *in* time and *above* time. His slogan is paradox: wait and hasten, hasten and wait. As one who lives in Christ he stands already at the end or the goal. On the other hand, as long as he lives in the flesh he has not yet reached the end, but moves toward it. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." The Christian's relation to time, then, is neither that of panic nor that of indifference, but a paradoxical unity of freedom and intense concern in the time-process.

In the third place, we must look more closely at what is meant by *the end of time*. That time has an end, does not mean that all which is and was will in time be annihilated. Eternity is not meant to be a mere negation of temporality but its fulfilment. Since God Himself has come into time, He has united time with His own Eternity. God has, so to speak, pledged Himself to time inasmuch as He has pledged Himself to temporal man. The Incarnation of the eternal Son of God means also His *Intemporation*. "When the fulness of time came, God sent forth His Son." In Jesus Christ God has tied together the time-process and His eternal Kingdom. With a slight change in the words we might make use of the well-known saying of Irenaeus: "God has become temporal that temporal man might become eternal." When we say that Eternity is the end or the goal, that is not a negation of time, but merely the negation of its negations. Eternal life is not Platonic timelessness, but fulfilled time. Eternal life is not the monotony of the once-and-for-all, but communion with the All-mighty God, who in Him-

self is not lonely, but is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Just as the Biblical idea of God is not the idea of the abstract Absolute, but the Triune Personal God, so the Biblical idea of Eternity is not abstract timelessness, but the fulfilment of time. What does that mean?

Eternal life is not extinction, but the perfection of the divinely created humanity, both individually and universally. Eternal life as the idealists or pantheists see it, is, whatever it may be, not individual eternal life, but a kind of dissolution of individuality in something universal. This idea is foreign to Biblical eschatology. It is in conflict with the personalism of the Biblical idea of God and of His relation to man. God does not aim at unity, but at communion. The Biblical figure of eternal life is the festal meal of communion, where men sit down together with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the Father's table. God does not want the individual face to disappear, but to transform it through Jesus Christ into the perfect image of God. Likewise, God does not want to annihilate the results of temporal history and life. He merely wants to annihilate their negations, sin, death, imperfection, suffering, etc. "If any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. And if any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." The Church of Christ, the Body of Jesus, shall not be destroyed, but shall be perfected beyond history.

Finally, we must inquire into the relation between the form of time and Eternity. We start from the fact that according to the New Testament there is something which the Christian experiences in time and which remains in Eternity, when everything else, even faith and hope, shall be done away: that is, *love*. Love, in the sense of *agape*, is not merely the object of Christian hope, but also a present experience in the life of the Christian and of the Church "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us". Love therefore is known as a reality within the Christian community and is active in the life of the true believer. Love is

of the character of eternal life, nay, it is the very essence of God. "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." Certainly love is spoken of too lightly, and we make too little of it, but that does not alter the fact that there is a love, lived in the temporal life, which is precisely that of which the New Testament speaks. Now what is the relation between this love and time?

Time, as we experience it, is three-dimensional, past, present, and future. This expression "three-dimensional", however, is borrowed from space and is therefore inadequate. Past, present, and future are different from each other. They are not interchangeable, like the three dimensions of space. The present is not merely a point without extension but a dividing line between the future and the past. No sooner has something, which was expected in the future, become present than it has already become something of the past. Once again, it was Augustine who put his finger on this, and, if I am not mistaken, seems to have been aware of the important fact that experienced time is different from thought time. Experienced time is, to use Bergson's phrase, *durée réelle*. That we can experience the present is due to the fact that it is ours already as something future and that it is still ours as something past. Human existence could not be human, i.e. it could not have the essentially human characteristics, if this were not the case. All thought is a synthesis, a unity of different elements, and as such transcends the temporality of the present moment. Let us call the present which is merely thought, and which therefore has no extension, "crumbling-time" (*die zerbröckelnde Zeit*). In this "crumbling-time" the present is merely an atom of time, or not even that, a point without extension. This "crumbling-time" is transcended or, as it were, eliminated in every thought, since thought is the unity of a plurality of elements. That is the basis of the Platonic idea that truth is beyond time and that cognition of truth participates in a timeless Eternity. Certainly we know that when we speak of God and call Him eternal, His thought is not like ours, embedded in "crumbling-time". "With Him a thousand years are as one day." God's Eternity is not a present that is broken up into parts. It is an undivided present. When He reveals Himself to us, God enters into our time, into our temporal existence, but He does not become temporal Him-

self. He remains Eternal so that past, present, and future are one in Him. We human beings who are created after the image of God somehow share in this supra-temporality, for whenever we perform meaningful acts, acts of synthesis, we somehow transcend the crumbling of time. On the other hand, we are creatures and all our thinking and understanding is embedded in "crumbling-time" and is impeded by it.

It is the result of sin, which destroys the image of God in us, that our life is oppressed by temporality, by "crumbling-time", in a way and to an extent which do not belong to our human destiny, but rather to our rebellion against it. When we think of our future we are burdened with agony and anxiety; when we think of our past, we are burdened with the terrible weight of the guilt of our sin. As we are created after the image of God and not like mere animals we cannot shake off the burden of our past, nor can we escape the fear of the future. This double burden is our lot as sinful human beings.

What is the significance of sin for our experience of the present? It means that we seek endlessly to shake off our dark past, although we never succeed in doing so. It means too that we cannot cease to try to dominate our future of which we are afraid, although we always fail to do so. And so our life is, as it were, ground between these two mill-stones: unsuccessful flight from the past and unsuccessful domination over the future. In this two-fold effort we love the present. Sinful man does not have a real present, because he is always so fruitlessly concerned about his past and about his future.

This lack of a real present, which is the existence of sinful man, manifests itself particularly with regard to his fellow-man. Sinful man is not present for his fellow-man. He is too preoccupied with his own past and his own future to realise properly the *thou* of the other. He seeks himself because he has no real present, and by seeking himself he is not there for his fellow-man. You may turn it the other way round, and say that the other is not there for him. He is not there as a subject, as he ought to be, because he becomes the object of his fears and desires—that is, he becomes a part of that past which he flees or a part of the future which he wants to dominate. He is not there as his *thou*, as a real presence.

It is otherwise with the Christian. It is his experience in

Christ that he is given to have a real present. The burden of the past, the guilt of sin, is taken away from him by forgiveness, and the agony and fear of the future are taken away from him by the certainty of eternal communion with Christ. In the Gospel it is not only sin and forgiveness that are spoken about, but fear and confidence too. Through Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit man is given to participate in the true present which God possesses; and this new kind of present in the concrete form in which it is expressed is nothing else than the love of God which is "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost".

The evidence for the truth of this conception of the real present is to be found, if I may say so, in the actual fact of experience that faith in Christ brings with it a new relation to other men. Real faith manifests itself in making man aware of the *thou*, his neighbour, whom God gives to him. Liberated from anxiety and fear of the future, redeemed from the guilt of the past, he is given an open heart and mind. He has time; he has heart and thought for his fellow-man. He is compelled no longer to make an object of him. Now he can see him as a subject, without repelling him or taking him a prisoner. Now he has communion with him. It is in this communion, in which they are present to each other, that he himself gains the experience of the true present. That is why it is love that abides, when all earthly things pass away, for it is of the same nature as Eternity. Love is both the true present and Eternal Life.

I have come to an end. It remains for me now only to remind you that I have only attempted to give a slight sketch of the Christian understanding of time. Even the theologian, like the rest of sinful mankind, is embedded in "crumbling-time". Perhaps I have been too daring in putting before you something unfinished, although perhaps I would have been too cautious had I waited until these thoughts had attained some perfection. At any rate, I place myself with all my unfinished thoughts, which I have given to you in this article, under the judgment and grace of God, by which we all live.

THE LAMB OF GOD

by The Rev. Professor G. FLOROVSKY

Christianity is essentially a historical religion. It is not primarily a system of beliefs, nor is it just a perfect code of morality. Christianity is first of all a vigorous appeal to history, a witness of faith to certain particular events or facts of history. For these events were truly eventful, and these historical moments or "instants" were utterly momentous. For, by faith, we identify and acknowledge them as "mighty deeds" of God, as His intimate interventions into the course of human destiny. Already under the Old Dispensation the Living God has established His Covenant with the Chosen People, Israel, and has admitted her, the only nation of the earth, into a fellowship with Him. The God of the Old Testament did not communicate to men abstract metaphysical ideas about Himself, but He met man and challenged him in the midst of his daily existence, "amid toil and tribulation". The Old Testament was truly a Covenant, a sacred fellowship, not primarily the Law and the doctrine. True, it was but a provisional fellowship, a shadow and a figure of the Good Things to come. It was a Covenant of hope and expectation, a Covenant of prophecy and promise. The consummation was ahead. Yet, it was a real Covenant indeed. And in due course it was fulfilled and thereby superseded; perfected and accomplished, and thereby abrogated. The mighty deeds of God, the *Magnalia Dei*, culminated in an ultimate and personal Revelation: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1.14). Christian faith and hope can never be detached from this Divine achievement, can never be taken out of this definite and unique historical setting. Our Creed is emphatically historic. It bears witness precisely to these crucial interventions and acts of God: the Incarnation, the Death on the Cross, the glorious Resurrection and the Ascension, and finally the Pentecost, the Descent of the Spirit, who came down to seal and to disclose the victory and the glory of the Lord. Our faith is rooted in, our hope is based on, those facts or events, on what had happened

and taken place in a particular and concrete context of space and time, *hic et nunc*. Yet, being essentially historical, Christianity is, by that very reason, a personal religion. We, Christians, do not believe in ideas, but in a Person. To be Christian means exactly to believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, and Him Crucified and Risen, and to acknowledge Him as the Incarnate Lord and the Saviour of the world. Again, He is not only a Master to be followed, not only a Lord to be obeyed, not only a Redeemer to be trusted and adored. He is above all the Head of His Body, which is the Church, the blessed company of the believers. And this phrase is not merely a beautiful metaphor. It is indeed an epitome of the whole Christian experience of faith. Christians are the members, and Christ Jesus is the Head. Both belong organically together, as the true Vine and the branches, in an intimate intercourse and communion of life. Christians are precisely to live and to dwell *in Him*, in the phrase of St. Paul, to be *in Christ*. For Christ Himself still abides in the world which He has redeemed and saved. "The days of His flesh" (Heb. 5.7) are over, and yet He has not deserted the world. He stays with His faithful flock, as He had promised, "alway even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28.20). He is not only a historical personality of the past, whom we might attain by an effort of a historical imagination or recollection. He came down "from heaven", never to depart. And in the glory of the Holy Trinity He is since and forever the God Incarnate, the God made man, the God-Man. The mystery of His person is fully disclosed and accomplished in the mystery of the Church. As Bossuet has put it, the Church is exactly "Jesus Christ répandu et communiqué". For Christ is, in the phrase of St. Paul again, "the Last Adam", or "the Second Man" (1 Cor. 15.45, 47). He is "the firstfruits" of the New Humanity (v. 23).

2. "When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, He asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? . . . And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16.13, 16). This answer was accurate and right, though its full meaning and connotation could hardly be available for Simon Peter at the moment he spoke. For no person can call Jesus the Lord except by the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. 12.3) and the Spirit was not

yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified (John 7.39). And only after Pentecost could the mystery of the Incarnation be fully apprehended in the Church, though it can never be fully comprehended by a finite mind. It is, and is ever to be, a mystery. It is available not by the joy of metaphysical speculations, but by faith only, in the communion and spiritual conversation with the Lord Himself. Still, *credo ut intelligam*. Faith brings light and illumination to the intellect too. The whole experience and faith of the early Church is admirably condensed in the concise formula of the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon (451). The main emphasis of this formula is on the *personal unity* of Christ. When one asks, *Who is* Christ Jesus, "Jesus of history", the only permissible answer is, He is God, the Only Begotten Son of God, yet Incarnate and "made man". His personality, or *hypostatis*, is *one*, and it is a *Divine* personality, the Second person of the Holy Trinity. The Son of God Himself is the person or subject of human life too. Two natures, Divine and human, are joined and correlated in the unity of Person—and both natures are complete and genuine. The fathers of Chalcedon spoke of the double "consubstantiality" of Christ—with the Father according to the Godhead, with us men according to manhood. If we ask, *who* was born from the Virgin Mary, *who* was crucified under Pontius Pilate, *who* has experienced and done all that was narrated and recorded in the Gospels, we have to reply, emphatically and unambiguously, the Son of the Living God, "One of the Holy Trinity". This means simply that there was no independent human personality in Jesus Christ. Or again, *the same Person* is to be spoken of as God and as man, because there was the Divine person Incarnate. Of course, the term "Incarnation" does not denote only a "bodily existence", but all-inclusively the fulness of manhood. This ancient formula may seem to the modern man, in our days, somewhat abstruse and uninviting, it may fail to-day to convey any definite conception. Yet, the fault is not with the formula itself, but rather with the "modern man", and his wrong approach to the matter. The "definition" of Chalcedon is not a metaphysical statement, and was never meant to be taken as such. It is a dogmatic or doctrinal statement, a statement of faith. It must not be isolated from the experience of the Church. It is, as it were, an intellectual contour of the

mystery which is apprehended by faith. It is a sign-post and a key, a key both to the New Testament story and to the existential situation of the Church, the blessed community of the redeemed. Here lies the existential emphasis of the statement. Our Redeemer *is* God Himself and *not* a man. Our Redeemer is One who "came down" and who, by being "made man", identified Himself with men, in the fellowship of a truly human life and nature. Our Redemption means a Divine "coming down", a Divine condescending, and not simply an ascending of man. Not only the initiative was Divine, but the Captain of our salvation was a Divine Personality himself. The fulness of the human nature in Christ means simply the adequacy and the truth of the redeeming identification. Not only God was in Christ, but Christ was Himself God Incarnate. This sounds paradoxical and mysterious. And there is a mystery indeed: "and without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifested in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3.16). This very "mystery" can never be adequately described in plain words. Doctrinal formulae are instructive and convincing only in the living context of faith. They never help very much when taken *in abstracto*. By their very nature and purpose, they bear witness to certain facts. They would not appeal at all to an obstinate unbeliever. They do not convince by the logic of a self-contained reasoning. Reasoning may help to remove certain prejudices —*intelligo ut credam*. But ultimate conviction springs only out of the evidence of faith. Faith alone makes formulae live. "It seems paradoxical, yet it is the experience of all observers of spiritual things: no one profits by the Gospels unless he be first in love with Christ."[1] For Christ is not a text, but a living Person. And decisive evidence, in the matters of faith, is precisely *testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum*. It is not to be confused with the private experience or judgment of individual Christians. This "evidence" is available only in the Church and through the Church, for the first mystery of the Spirit in our lives is exactly that "by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body" (1 Cor. 12.13), and one mind is created among the faithful. It is precisely through the "common mind" of the Church that the Holy Spirit speaks to the believers. And the common mind of the Church Universal bears faithful witness

[1] Dom Anscar Vonier, O.S.B., *The Personality of Christ*, p. 9.

to the crucial facts and acts of the Divine Self-disclosure and Revelation.

3. "And was made man." . . . This is the fulness of Revelation. The Son of God came down from Heaven to redeem the earth, and to unite man with God for ever. The new age has been initiated—we count now the *anni Domini*, the years of Grace, exactly *post Christum natum*. As St. Irenaeus says, "then the Son of God became the Son of man, that man also might become the son of God".[1] Not only is the original fulness of human nature restored or re-established in the Incarnation. Not only does human nature return to its communion with God, which was once lost through the Fall. The Incarnation is the *new* Revelation, the new and further step. For the Second Man is the Lord from Heaven, is God Incarnate (1 Cor. 15.47). In the Incarnation of the Son, human nature was not only anointed with a superabundant overflowing of Grace, but was assumed into an intimate and hypostatical unity with God Himself. In this lifting up of human nature into an everlasting communion with the Divine Life, the Fathers of the early Church unanimously saw the very essence of salvation, the basis of the whole redeeming work of Christ. "That is saved which is united with God", says St. Gregory of Nazianzus. And what was not united could not be saved at all. This was his chief reason for insisting on the fulness of human nature, assumed by the Only Begotten in the Incarnation, as against Apollinaris.[2] This was the fundamental issue of the whole of early theology, in St. Irenaeus, St. Athanasius, the Cappadocian Fathers, St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. Maximus the Confessor, St. John Damascene. The whole history of Christological dogma was determined by this basic idea: the Incarnation of the Word, as Salvation. In the Incarnation human destiny is completed. God's eternal purpose is accomplished, "the mystery from eternity hidden and to angels unknown". The days of expectation are over. The tension of prophecy is solved. The Promised and the Expected has come. And from henceforth, in the phrase of St. Paul, the life of man "is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3.3). For the Incarnation of the Word was an absolute manifestation of God. It was not just a metaphysical miracle, it was the mystery of the Love Divine, of the Divine identification with the

[1] *Adv. Haer.*, III, 10.2. [2] *Epist.* 101, *ad Cledonium.*

lost man. And above all it was a revelation of Life. Christ is "the Word of Life"—"and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us" (1 John 1.1-2). The Incarnation itself is the quickening of man, as it were, the resurrection of human nature. Yet, God was not manifest in the flesh in order to recreate the fallen world at once by the exercise of His omnipotent might, or to illuminate and transfigure it by the overwhelming light of His eternal glory. It was in the uttermost humiliation that this revelation of Divinity was wrought. The climax of the Incarnate life is the Cross, the death of the Incarnate Life. The only true key to the story of the Gospels is precisely the Cross. "When I survey the wondrous Cross, on which the Prince of Glory died", I can penetrate into the very depth of the mystery of the Incarnation. Life Divine has been revealed in full through death, and is available only in the communion with the Crucified. This is the paradoxical mystery of the Christian existence: life through death, life from the grave, the mystery of the life-bearing grave. And we are born to real and everlasting life precisely through our baptismal death and burial with Christ and in Him: we are regenerated and born anew with Christ in the baptismal font. Such is the invariable law of true life. "That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die" (1 Cor. 15.36). The Incarnation itself has been already an eschatological achievement. It was already a consummation of the Divine purpose. Christ is the *Last* Adam, i.e. the "last" and ultimate man (*ho eschatos*). In Him the new and ultimate Humanity has been initiated. With Him the new man was born at Bethlehem, but born for the life of humiliation, for the life crucified. It was just the beginning of the story. The will of God does not abolish the original status of human freedom, it does not destroy or abrogate the "ancient law of human freedom" (the phrase is by St. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, 4.37.1). Herein is revealed a certain self-limitation or *kenosis* of the Divine might, and more than that, a certain *kenosis* of Divine Love itself. Divine Love in Christ, as it were, restricts and limits itself in the maintenance of the freedom or "self-power" of the creation, Love does not impose the healing by compulsion, as it might have done. There was no compelling evidence

in this absolute manifestation of God. Not all did recognise the Lord of Glory under that "guise of the servant" He deliberately took upon Himself. And whosoever did recognise it, did so not by any natural insight, but by the revelation of the Father (cf. Matt. 16.17). The Incarnate Word appeared on earth as man among men. This was the redeeming assumption of all human fulness, not only of human nature, but also of the fulness of human life. The Incarnation had to be manifested in all the fulness of life, in the fulness of human ages, that all that fulness might be sanctified. This is one of the aspects of the idea of the "summing up" of all in Christ (*recapitulatio*, *anakephalaiōsis*) which was taken up with such emphasis by St. Irenaeus from St. Paul.[1] And this was again the "humiliation" of the Word (cf. Phil. 2.7). Yet, this humiliation or *kenosis* was no reduction of His Divinity; which in the Incarnation continues unchanged. It was, on the contrary, a lifting-up of man, the sanctification or "deification" of human nature, the *theosis*. It may be a hard word, but it is the only adequate phrase to denote that intimacy of fellowship with God which is disclosed in Christ for the believers. It must be stressed, that in the Incarnation, the Word assumes the original human nature, innocent and pure, and free from "original sin", i.e. without any stain. This does not violate the fulness of the nature, nor does this affect the Saviour's likeness to us sinful men. For sin does not belong to human nature, but is a parasitic and abnormal growth. We may say, sinful humanity is not fully and properly human. Sin is a degradation or a reduction. Sinlessness belongs to the fulness of the Incarnation. In the Incarnation the Son of God assumes the first-formed human nature, as it was created "in the image of God", and thereby the image of God is again re-established in man. It was not yet the assumption of human tragedy, of human suffering, or of suffering humanity. It was an assumption of human life, but not yet of human death. Christ's freedom from original sin constitutes also His ultimate freedom from death, which is but "the wages of sin" for man, and is not his natural destiny. Christ is unstained from corruption and mortality right from His birth. And, like the First Adam before the Fall, He is able not to die at all, *potens non mori*, though obviously He can still die, *potens autem mori*. But

[1] *Adv. Haer.*, III, 18.1, 7; II, 22.4.

He was exempt from the *necessity* of death, because his Humanity was pure and innocent. Therefore Christ's death was and could not but be voluntary, not by the grim necessity of fallen nature, but by free choice and acceptance. Christ is indeed "the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world" (John 1.29). But He does not take the sin of the world in the Incarnation. This taking on of the sin is an act of will, not a necessity of nature. The Saviour *bears* the sin of the world (rather than *assumes* it) by the free choice of love. He bears it in such a way that it does not constitute His own sin, or violate the purity and integrity of His nature and will. He carries it freely. Hence this taking "up" of sin acquires a redeeming power, as a free act of compassion and love. Hence the voluntary death of the Last Adam becomes a true sacrifice of reconciliation and a betrothal of immortality. The death of Our Lord was in full freedom. No one takes His life away. He Himself offers His soul by His own supreme will and authority. "I have authority", He said (John 10.18). He suffered and died, "not because He could not escape suffering, but because He chose to suffer" (from the Catechism by Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow). He not only permitted, but *willed* it. Hence his death was a sacrifice and oblation.

4. Our Lord's earthly life is one organic whole, and His redeeming action cannot be exclusively connected with any one particular moment in that life. However, the climax of this life was obviously its death. Jesus plainly bore witness to the hour of death: "for this cause came I unto this hour" (John 12.27). Salvation is completed on Golgotha, not on Tabor, and the Cross of Jesus was foretold even on Tabor (cf. Luke 9.31). The redeeming death is the ultimate purpose of the Incarnation. Or in the sharp phrase of Tertullian, *forma moriendi causa nascendi est*.[1] This may seem again rather exaggerated and paradoxical. In fact, we have to go even further than that. The death of Christ is to be regarded as an organic moment of the Incarnation itself. It is implied in its redemptive purpose. There are certain theological reasons for regarding the Incarnation as an integral part of the original plan of Creation. That is to say that the Son of God would have been incarnate even if man had not fallen at all. This problem had

[1] *De Carne Christ*, 6.

never been formally raised in the Patristic period (except for St. Maximus the Confessor), but it was vividly discussed in the West, both in medieval and post-Reformation times and is still under dispute and discussion. It seems to be more coherent to regard the Incarnation as an organic consummation of the primordial creative purpose of God and not to make it essentially dependent upon the Fall, i.e. upon the disruption of this purpose by the revolt and depravation of the creature. There is no need to discuss the proofs and arguments at length. The greatest plea for a "supralapsarian" conception of the Incarnation has been made perhaps by Duns Scotus, and very little has been added to the discussion since. St. Thomas Aquinas himself had to admit the full weight of the "supralapsarian" argument and yet hesitated to make a doctrinal statement on the strength of theological convenience only. In doctrine we must not go beyond the direct evidence of the Scripture and Tradition. And it is obvious that the Christian message from the very beginning was precisely the message of Salvation, and Our Lord was described just as the Saviour of the world and the Redeemer of fallen mankind. We may not deal with abstract possibilities, actually unrealised and frustrated, nor build the doctrinal synthesis on the analysis of probabilities, in fact of a *casus irrealis*. The balance is to be kept, of course. We cannot dogmatically insist that Redemption was the *only* "motive" or reason for the Incarnation. Yet, we have to deal with the *fact* of the Incarnation, and not with its *idea*. We know, both historically and spiritually, both from the Scripture and from the experience of the Church—we know the Incarnate Lord *only* as Our *Saviour*—we know the Incarnate precisely as a Crucified and Risen One, precisely as *the Lamb of God*. The Son of God "came down into a *fallen* world, to seek and to bring back the *lost* sheep. Moreover, we ourselves cannot escape our own existential situation. We *are* in the predicament of sin and mortality, we *are* but "miserable sinners", though created in the image of God and predestined for blessed union with Him. "I am an image of Thy unfathomable glory though bearing the wound of the transgressions."[1] This "wound" is utterly existential, is grim and sad reality. We are in need of forgive-

[1] Eastern Orthodox office of the Burial of the departed, an anthem by St. John of Damascus.

ness and restoration first of all, although forgiveness as such is not yet the ultimate goal. Our Saviour not only brings us the Divine forgiveness, but brings us, ourselves, back into communion and unity with God. The goal is Life Everlasting, the remission of sins is but a key to the Paradise of Glory, to the house of the Father with many mansions. In any case, we can apprehend the mystery of the Incarnation only in the context of the Redemption. Yet Redemption itself is but the Revelation of Life. Once more we have to recall that Incarnation is not just a cosmic miracle, or a sort of metaphysical readjustment, but essentially a *personal act* of the Living God. It opens a new mode of the Divine activity in the world. It is a new and intimate identification of the Love Divine with human need and misery. Now, the very sting of sin in human existence is precisely human mortality. Death is, in the phrase of St. Paul, "the last enemy", i.e. the *ultimate* enemy, *ho eschatos echthros* (1 Cor. 15.26). This is not a metaphorical or a symbolical expression. It is the very point of St. Paul's soteriological vision and conception. The full victory of Christ will be revealed and accomplished precisely in the general Resurrection, of which Christ's Resurrection is a token and a pledge. That new union between God and man, which had been inaugurated in the Incarnation, had to be extended to the whole state of fallen humanity, including the hopeless disintegration of human fabric by its unescapable liability to death. The mystery of the Incarnation was, as it were, to be extended to the darkness of Hades or Sheol. It has been actually extended in the voluntary death of the Incarnate, which by itself proved to be the ultimate abrogation of death. The Son of God was born of the Virgin and "was made man"—it was the assumption of human *nature*. By love and compassion, the Incarnate took upon Himself the *sin* of man. By the same love and co-suffering (i.e. "sympathy") He died—this was the assumption of human *death*. And therein the Incarnation, i.e. the identification of God with the human situation, was completed. And in the death of the Incarnate death was destroyed and abrogated for ever. The death on the Cross itself was a supreme and ultimate revelation of Life. The death of the Incarnate was an ultimate confrontation of Life and death, and victory of Life. "Because it was not possible that He should be holden of it" (Acts 2.24).

5. In Christian experience death is first revealed as a deep tragedy, as a painful metaphysical catastrophe, as a mysterious failure of human destiny, as an ultimate predicament of human existence. For death is not a normal term of human existence. Man's death is abnormal; it is a failure. God did not create death: He created man for incorruption and true being, that he "might have being" (Wisd. 6.18 and 2.23). In current philosophies nowadays, the "immortality of the soul" is overemphasised to such an extent that the "mortality of man" is almost completely overlooked. The Biblical view is radically different from this current opinion, or rather prejudice. In the Bible, and in the whole of the Christian experience, death is apprehended as an ultimate misery, as an ultimate frustration of human existence. For man is not just a soul, and soul, by itself, is but a "part" of human fabric: as St. Irenaeus puts it, *neque enim est anima ipsa secundum se homo, sed anima hominis est pars hominis.*[1] Perhaps it was Athenagoras of Athens, a Christian apologist of the second century, who put forward this basic conception with clarity and vigour. "Soul and body compose in man one living entity." And therefore there is no more man, if and when their union and cohesion is broken. If death is to be the ultimate term of human destiny, it means simply that man no longer exists. Disincarnation of the soul is really the disappearance of man, as man.[2] This was the common and basic conviction of all the Fathers of the early Church. Separation of soul and body is the death of the man himself, the discontinuation of his existence, i.e. of his existence as a man. A body without a soul is but a corpse, and a soul without body is but a ghost. The death of man is the "wages of sin" (Rom. 6.23), for sin itself is the spiritual death, an estrangement and separation of man from the only spring of the true life, which is God. And therefore, the only escape out of this ultimate frustration of human existence is in the reunion with God. Salvation for man is above all an escape from the "bondage of corruption" (Rom. 8.21), i.e. the restoration of the original wholeness and stability of human nature, or the resurrection. Yet, the resurrection is possible only in God. Christ, the Incarnate Word, is the Resurrection and the Life (John 11.25). The union of God with man was restored and re-established

[1] *Adv. Haer.*, V, 6.1. [2] *De Resurr. Mort.*, 13.

of the Incarnation, or rather in the "hypostatical union" of the Incarnate Lord. It is not an impersonal unity, but unity of a Person. St. Athanasius, the classical doctor of the Incarnation, makes this point very well. Could not really the union of the fallen man with God be restored by repentance? No, says St. Athanasius. Repentance cannot overcome that state of corruption, i.e. of death and decomposition, which had been initiated by sin. Man not only sinned but fell into corruption. Now the Word of God descended and became man, "that, whereas man turned towards corruption, He might turn them again towards incorruption and quicken them from death by the appropriation of His body and by the grace of the Resurrection, banishing death from them like a straw from the fire". Yet death is vanquished not simply by the appearance of Life in the mortal body, but rather by the voluntary death of the Incarnate Life. The Word became incarnate on account of death in the flesh, St. Athanasius emphasises. "In order to accept death He had a body", and only through His death was the resurrection possible.[1] Christ suffered death, but passed through it and overcame mortality and corruption. As it were, He quickened death itself. "By death He destroyed death" (an Easter hymn). The death of the Cross was effective, not as a death of an Innocent One, but as the death of the Incarnate Lord. "We needed an Incarnate God, God put to death, that we might live", to use a bold phrase of St. Gregory of Nazianzus.[2] For, the *Person*, who was crucified and died, was *Divine*—there was no human "hypostasis" in Christ. It was not a mere man who died. "For He who suffered was not common man, but God made man."[3] It may be properly said that God died on the Cross, in His own humanity. "He who dwelleth in the highest is reckoned among the dead, and in the little grave findeth lodging."[4] This was the voluntary death of One who is Himself Life Eternal, who is in very truth the Life. A human death indeed, death according to humanity, but death within the hypostasis of the Word, the Incarnate Word, and hence a resurrecting death. It was a true death. Yet, not wholly like ours, simply because this was the death of the Incarnate Word, i.e.

[1] *De Incarnatione*, 6-8, 21, 44.
[2] *Orat. XLV in S. Pascha*, 28.
[3] St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.*, 13.6.
[4] Eastern Orthodox office of the Good Saturday, Matins.

within the indivisible *Hypostasis* of the Word-made-man. Again, it was a voluntary death—His death was not the "wages of sin". It was caused not by the necessity of the fallen nature, but by the freedom of the Redeeming Love. The main point is that it was a death within the *Hypostasis* of the Word, the death of the "enhypostasised" humanity. Death is a separation, and in the death of the Lord indeed His most precious body and soul were separated. Yet the one *hypostasis* of the Word Incarnate was not divided, the "hypostatic union" was not broken or destroyed. In other words, though separated in death, the soul and the body remained still united through the Divinity of the Word, in the common *hypostasis* of both. This does not alter the ontological character of death, but changes its meaning. This was an "incorrupt death", and therefore corruption and death were overcome in it, and in it begins the resurrection. The very death of the Incarnate reveals the resurrection of human nature.[1] There are two aspects of the mystery of the Cross. It is at once a mystery of shame and a mystery of glory. It is indeed a mystery of sorrow and mortal anguish, a mystery of humiliation and desertion. And the Church warns us against every docetic underestimate of the reality and fulness of Christ's sufferings, *ut non evacuetur crux Christi* (1 Cor. 1.17). Yet the Church warns us also against the opposite over-emphasis, against all kenotic exaggeration. The death of Christ is itself already the victory over death, not only as a triumph of humility and love, but above all as a victory of immortality and life. It is a victory not only because it was followed by the Resurrection. The Resurrection only reveals and discloses the victory achieved on the Cross. The Resurrection is already achieved in the very falling-asleep of the God-man. The power of the Resurrection is exactly the power of the Cross, i.e. the power of the voluntary Passion and death of the God-man. This mystery of the resurrecting Cross is commemorated especially on Good Saturday. This is more than merely the eve of salvation. It is already the very day of our salvation. "This is the blessed Sabbath, this is the day of rest, whereon the Only Begotten Son of God has rested from all His deeds" (Vespers of Good Saturday). This is the day of the Descent into Hell. And the Descent into Hell is the Resur-

[1] Cf. St. John of Damascus, *De Fide Orth.*, III, 27.

rection. Hell, or Hades, or the "subterranean abodes", to which the Lord "descended", is just the darkness and shadow of death, rather a place of mortal anguish than a place of penal torments, the common abode of the departed, a dark Sheol, a state of hopeless disembodiment and disincarnation, which was only scantily and dimly fore-illumined by the slanting rays of the not-yet-risen Sun, by the hope and expectation yet unfulfilled. Before Christ's coming down, all descended "into hell", into infernal darkness, both righteous and wicked. They were all really the "spirits in prison" (1 Peter 3.19). And it was into *this* prison, into *this* "hell", that the Lord and Saviour descended by His death. This was His identification with the departed. Thus, amid the darkness of pale death shone the unquenchable light of Life, and Life Divine. Thereby Hell was destroyed and abrogated. Death was overcome by Life. "The Descent of Christ into Hell" (and this is a credal phrase indeed) was the manifestation of Life amid the hopelessness of death, and therefore a victory over death. Christ "descended into hell" as the Victor, *Christus Victor*, as the Master of Life. He descended in His glory, although through humiliation of the Cross. As St. Athanasius says, "it was not from any natural weakness of the Word that dwelt in it that the body had died, but in order that in it death might be done away by the power of the Saviour".[1] In the death of the Saviour the powerlessness of death was revealed. He is Life Everlasting, and the very fact of His death signifies the end of death's dominion. In the first Adam the inherent potentiality of death by disobedience was actualised. In the second Adam, who is the Lord from Heaven, the potentiality of immortality by purity and obedience was sublimated into the impossibility of death. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15.22). The victory of the Cross was disclosed in the Resurrection. And in the Resurrection the Incarnation is completed—a victorious manifestation of life within human nature and existence —a grafting of immortality into the human composition. "I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth, and was dead: and behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen. And I have the keys of death and of hell" (Rev. 1.17-18). The dark vale of Hades is abolished by the power of the life-giving Cross.

[1] *De Inc.*, 26.

6. The Resurrection of Christ was a victory not over His death only, but over death in general. In Him the whole of humanity is co-resurrected—not in the sense that all are raised from the grave, and nobody dies any longer. What is abolished is the hopelessness of death and mortal dissolution. Death is rendered powerless. St. Paul makes this quite clear. "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. . . . For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised" (1 Cor. 15.13, 16). St. Paul meant to say that the Resurrection of Christ would become meaningless if it were not an universal accomplishment, if the whole Body were not implicitly "pre-resurrected" with the Head, and in Him. Apart from the sure hope of the General Resurrection, belief in Christ would be vain and to no purpose: it would only be vainglory (v. 17). "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept" (v. 20). All will rise, by the power of Christ's resurrection. From henceforth every disembodiment is but temporary. The integrity of human fabric or composition is restored. Human existence is again rendered truly human. Yet, again it is not just a metaphysical miracle, not just a cosmic readjustment, which could be automatically applied or imputed to any man, without any regard to his inner state or disposition. Of course, all will rise, and no one, so far as nature is concerned, can any more alienate himself from the invincible power of the resurrection. The victory of Christ over death and mortality is truly final and universal. But just because it is not just an impersonal miracle, but precisely a personal deed of God, a personal response and participation of individual persons is required too. Neither the Incarnation, nor the Resurrection acts automatically or by violence of the omnipotent might of God. They are for us "unto salvation" only in so far as we appropriate them by faith. Salvation is truly universal, i.e. available for every one. And yet there is no salvation outside of the Church, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*. That is to say, there is no salvation but in Christ. Now, we are truly "in Christ" only when and if we believe in Him and by faith share in His riches. The New Humanity is already initiated in the Last Adam, in the Second Man. But we have to be incorporated into this new humanity by faith. The Christian life, the redeemed existence, is initiated in us with a new birth,

by water and the Spirit. And first, faith and "repentance" are required (*metanoia*, an inner change or conversion, intimate and resolute). Then, Baptism. And let us remember, the symbolism of baptism is definitely a symbolism of Christ's death and resurrection: "buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead" (Col. 2.12); cf. Rom. 6.3-4, and 2 Tim. 2.11. For it is in baptism that we become "members" of Christ, grafted into His Body, "rooted and built up in Him" (Col. 2.7). And thereby the grace of the Resurrection is shed abroad on us—it is already shed, not only will be shed. Before it is consummated in the General Resurrection, at the Last Day, the Life Eternal is already manifest in the spiritual rebirth of believers, granted and accomplished in baptism, and the union with the Risen Lord is already the initiation of the resurrection and of the life to come. In the early Church the rite of Christian initiation was not divided. Three sacraments belonged together: Baptism, the Holy Chrism or Confirmation, the Eucharist. All these sacraments are instituted just in order to enable men to associate themselves with the redeeming death of Christ and gain thereby the grace of His resurrection. They are not merely symbols or signs: in them, the ultimate reality is in very truth disclosed and conveyed. And in this sense they are an extension of the Incarnation: in them that new union of God with man, which was initiated in the Incarnation, is ever present and made available for believers. And all this hieratic symbolism culminates in the august mystery of the Holy Altar, "the perfect and final sacrament". Again, it is the sacrament of our incorporation. The sacramental life of the Church is its building up. Through the sacraments, and in them, the new life of Christ is extended and bestowed upon the members of His Body. We may say: in the sacraments, the Incarnation, the true reunion of man with God in Christ, is consummated.

"O Christ, Passover great and most Holy, O Wisdom, Word and Power of God: Vouchsafe that we may more perfectly partake of Thee in the days of Thine everlasting Kingdom."[1]

[1] Easter hymn, recited by the priest at every celebration.

CHURCH AND INTERCOMMUNION

Some Considerations bearing on the Present Problem[1]

by The Rev. Professor WILLIAM MANSON

In introducing this subject I recognise that some degree of objectivity and dispassionateness is prescribed by regard for the inter-Church membership of the society which I address. This limitation is not, however, to the disadvantage of the discussion any more than it is separable from the historical situation which lies behind the problem, and therefore I make no apology for soliciting the privilege of the occasion for the observations which I have to make on "Church and Intercommunion". The subject is one which needs for its setting a really ecumenical atmosphere. What has become regular and normal on the platform of the Faith and Order Conference should not be out of place in the more intimate arena of the present or similar fellowships. The representatives of the Churches must think together the nature of the ecumenical problem. They must seek together the lines of a practicable solution. The theologians and philosophers of the Churches should take responsibility for the straightening out of our ideas in the very tangled situation which history has produced and which it presents for our unravelling. The World Ecumenical Conference has signalled for an advance in this direction, and a theology divorced from interest in the Unity of the Church is not any longer justifiable.

It is not necessary in this paper to make more than a passing reference to the rise and progress of the Faith and Order Movement. It has had its measured stages, Lausanne, Edinburgh, Amsterdam. The first amazing result of the coming together of representatives from many Churches was the realisation, as with the force of a new discovery, of the essential unity of the Churches at the foundation level of the *gospel*. Classical expression was given to this discovery in the Section of the Lausanne Report entitled "The Churches' Message to the World", and a rocket soared up into the sky which still coruscates over each

[1] A paper read to the Edinburgh Theological Club, 14th November, 1950.

convention of the Ecumenical Council. The basic realisation of unity at the level of the gospel has not become dubious in an atmosphere heavily charged, since then, by the sense at Edinburgh and Amsterdam of very deep-seated *inter-ecclesiastical* difference. Disintegration has not developed within the Conference because this element of difference has had to be recognised. The Amsterdam Report says: "Although we cannot fully meet, our Lord will not allow us to turn away from one another", and again "we have found God, in His mercy, penetrating the barriers of our fundamental division and enabling us to *speak* . . . about the points at which we find we meet." This is, indeed, a new kind of speech with a new note of respect in it, and a conciliar tone which has not been heard before. Mr Oliver Tomkins in his recent admirable book *The Church in the Purpose of God* asserts it as the paradox of the "Faith and Order" movement that "it holds together Christians who are agreed that God wills the unity of the Church and who are disagreed as to the nature of the unity which He wills". "We *must* say", he adds, "that we are united in Jesus Christ", though "we *cannot* say that we are already one Church." The cohesive attraction which has thus compelled a somewhat confused and bewildered Assembly at Amsterdam to declare: "We intend to stay together" is for non-Roman Christendom a fact of extraordinary and indeed existential significance.

"*One spirit*"—yes! But the original sign under which the Christian Church knew itself to be pointed forward into the world with its "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all" was not that of "one Spirit" only, but of "one Body and one Spirit"; and here an element falls into the scales which has a more intractable substance and a more elusive quality than spirit—viz. the element of the human and historical factor in the Church. That the outward and the inward should be one belongs to the essence of the Church's calling, and behind the Church as the New Israel of God stands the earlier historical Israel, corporately called in Abraham and in Moses, and corporately persisting through the Davidic monarchy, the exile, and the priestly theocracy of the post-exilic times: one People, *one Body* by Divine calling. But not all who recognise and emphasise the corporate purpose involved in the Divine calling of Israel have been careful to reflect, as St.

Stephen did, on the *eschatological* nature of that calling, and on the part which blindness to this eschatological purpose and resistance to the correlative principle of the Holy Spirit played in bringing about the arrest and deformation of the holy People of God and the reduction of its corporate unity to a sub-spiritual level. By the eschatological principle I mean, of course, that God's purpose for Israel never allowed that people to settle down, but kept it ever moving forward toward an ultimate end, and by the Spirit I mean the Divine principle of life in the community which kept the community ever sensitive to this urge. It is to the same failure on the part of the new Israel, the corporate Church, to maintain itself under an adequate sense of the eschatological calling of God with a corresponding realisation of the freedom of the Spirit that we have to attribute the fact that in the Middle Ages the apocalyptic hope and the mystical life of Christianity were to a large extent driven underground, or forced to assert themselves in conscious opposition to the static life and world-acceptance of the organised Church.

In Christianity this *tension* and explosive impulsion have always been greater than in Judaism, because "the Lord" here is "the Spirit", and where the Spirit of the Lord is, is liberty in the sense of movement, ascension, forwardness, life. But, owing to the fixity of the ecclesiastical institution, when eschatology and the Spirit at length asserted themselves fully at the Reformation, it resulted in the splitting of the Church. Disunity entered as a necessary element in the continuity and fulness of the Church's life. The point which it is here sought to make is that while there is "One Body", and while the *wholeness* of our calling demands that we strive to recover the visible Unity of the Church, this result will have to be wrought out eschatologically by reference to the final purpose of God. The Church stands under the sign not only of the Beginning but of the End. It is not only under the Grace but under the Judgment of the Most High. It looks not only to the First Advent but to the Second. We must all, in so far as we are engaged in the ecumenical debate, Anglicans and Presbyterians, Protestants and Catholics, and all others, be prepared to cease looking backwards only to origins, digging ourselves in on old traditional ground, trying to capitalise grace in what we already

have, interpreting the trust committed to us merely in terms of what has come to us out of the holy past. We have got to turn towards the End, towards the ultimate Fulness of the Church, towards the Return of the Lord. On the sky of the Book of Revelation stands the Morning Star: "I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright, the morning Star." The radical life of the Church has to do with its eschatological vision.

How great this need of facing towards the Future is, both the state of the Churches and the schizophrenic danger to which the Ecumenical Conference is exposed amply testify. (1) There are the Churches. Here at the one extreme is the Roman Communion, claiming to embody all faith, all order, all authority, all sacramental life and grace institutionally within itself. Side by side with Rome, though differing as regards the centre-point and unity of hierarchical authority, are the communions of the Holy Orthodox Church of the East which also claims to possess the entire plenitude of Catholic faith and life. Here in both cases there is Church but not Intercommunion: for Communion does not exist except within the *Pleroma* of the Church as these Churches understand it. At the other end of the scale are the proliferated sects which represent the débris of Protestantism, the extremities at which an historical, doctrinal and ecclesiastical consciousness can hardly be said to circulate or even to exist. Here the corporate nature of the Church has vanished into the air. It has become invisible. There may be intercommunion of spirits, but if any sense of a corporate visible society persists, it is only in terms of the loosest conference or federation.

Between these two extremes, however, stands the solid block of the great orthodox communions of the reformed religion—the Lutheran, the Anglican and the Reformed—each the centre of a world-encircling fellowship of Churches. Here with Church there exists also at least the *potentiality* of Intercommunion. In Scotland, for example, without the presupposition of any kind of inter-ecclesiastical agreement, the Church is at liberty to open its communion table to all baptised and confirmed Christians, because that table is regarded as of pure dominical institution in the Church, and not as relative to, or limited by, a particular Church's historical and doctrinal form. The sacra-

ment is a catholic ordinance for catholic approach. It proclaims *the Lord in the Church*. In Anglicanism, on the other hand, we have Church but Intercommunion only on anxiously perpended terms of full ecclesiastical recognition. The central rite of communion, though dominical, is definitely subordinated to a conception of Church order. It proclaims *the Church in the Lord*. The position with regard to Intercommunion has indeed varied considerably during four centuries, but while to-day the will to large ecumenical *rapprochement* is very strong in Anglicanism, the disposition to narrow the terms makes its pressure increasingly felt. While, however, the "Lambeth Quadrilateral" has been generally accepted by the Faith and Order Conference as marking the lines of a viable approach to the ecumenical solution of the problem of the Churches, its articles must still be regarded as too simply drawn to make the Quadrilateral a fully adequate instrument for the purpose. For example, the stipulation, explicit or implied, that agreement on the first three of the points laid down in the Quadrilateral is null and void or at least imperfect if there is not concurrence also on the fourth, gives this fourth point—which relates to the Ministry—a cardinal importance which is not quite in scale until a previous question has been asked and answered, viz. "But what *is* the Episcopate on which the Apostolic Succession and the universal recognition of the Church's ministry depend?" That question is by no means as simple as it looks, but its complexity has not yet been sufficiently considered.

This being the situation in the Churches, is it any wonder that a headache has fallen (2) on the *Ecumenical Conference*? Here concern with past history and with our present deep divisions has led to the renewal at Amsterdam of the attempt to die-stamp all Churches as *either* "Catholic" or "Protestant" according to some *a priori* standard of measurement, and to draft us into tidy groups determined throughout the whole range of our ecclesiastical existence by some supposed principle of inner *consistency* in the group to which we belong. This, I feel, is an over-simplification of the situation which neither history nor theology can support. It assumes that the historic life of the Catholic Church cannot persist if there is deviation at any point from some given pattern of *formal* ecclesiastical order. We thus find the Ecumenical Conference in danger of

being over-hampered by traditional ideas and by a too anxious preoccupation with the historical past. For example, suppose it were contended, as it is contended in the Church of Scotland, that intercommunion ought to come before full communion can be reached, and that the Holy Communion service is essentially an *integrative* factor in the life of the Church, since "because there is one bread, we the many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Cor. 10.17). It might be objected, on the above principles, that these conclusions do not really follow, since the Holy Communion in a particular Church is entirely relative to the characteristics of the structure of faith and order in that Church, and therefore the bread which it breaks is not the "one bread" which integrates the Church; the question of the Church has to be settled first. So again, if we should declare, as in the Church of Scotland we have always declared, that the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments, as we possess it, *is* the ancient and age-long Ministry of the Church, but clothed again in its evangelical simplicity, and that under this form it continues the Episcopate among us and dates not from A.D. 1560 but from the ancient Catholic Church, and, indeed, from our Lord's institution, it might be replied again, on the same questionable principles, that because the Church in its *total* reformed shape dates only from 1560, then no part of what it has or holds possesses any authority going back behind that time. Such reasonings cannot be approved either on the ground of history or of doctrine. Strictly they apply, of course, to all Churches existing in separation, whether Lutheran, Anglican, or Reformed, as many Anglicans themselves are disposed to admit. But that does not make these arguments any sounder in themselves, for we cannot admit that the Anglican Eucharist is merely relative to that Church's particular doctrinal structure and ethos, or that the Anglican priesthood only dates from that Church's separation from Rome. No more can we thus relativise or date either our Sacrament or our priesthood in the Church of Scotland.

It may be replied, however, that it is not so much a question of the fact of our separation as of the *extent* of our separation from the central traditional pattern of the historical Church's life. And here comes in again, with a new force, the question of the Ministry in the Church. Even if our claim to retain the

Episcopate in the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments should be allowed, it might be held, and has been held in the volume edited by the Bishop of Oxford on *The Apostolic Ministry*, that what is really of consequence is the Apostolate in the Church, and that only where the Episcopate is present in its monarchial form is there an organ for maintaining and continuing the transcendence of the Apostolate over the general ministry and life of the Church. But in this theory of the nature of the Apostolic Succession in the Church either more is claimed for the Episcopate in point of fact than the facts really warrant, or less is meant by the Apostolate than the language used would seem to require. When, for example, a distinguished Anglo-Catholic theologian makes the statement that between the Apostles and other ministries we find not "parity" but "gradation", it is impossible not to agree with him, but when he adds that "Unless the Church of the subsequent ages is to be radically different from the earliest Church there will be men with a *like* distinctive authority", I have to put to him the question "But how far does this required 'likeness' go?" Even if we should discount the fact of the symbolic twelve-ness of the Apostles, we should still have to ask whether or not there was a *primacy* of St. Peter among the Apostles. If this primacy existed, what then of the Anglican attitude to the See of Rome? If it did not exist, what then of the Roman attitude to the See of Canterbury?

Within the area, therefore, in which the writ of the Apostolic Succession through the Episcopate is supposed to run, there are, obviously, gaping crevasses, unbridgeable gulfs, and unsurmounted barriers. "Catholicism" on this particular theory of its marks is involved in contradictions. It covers up differences, and are these differences any less real than those which divide Anglican from Presbyterian? In point of fact the Anglo-Catholic synthesis is not Roman nor yet Orthodox, except to the extent of a part. The other part is shared with the communions of the Reformed Church. We may say that this Anglo-Catholic synthesis is strong and appeals to historical minds because it embodies a very full comprehension of what belonged, in point of Faith and Order, to the ancient Church at the time of the first great schism. But Anglicanism did not *stem* historically from the nodal point at which this divergence of East and

West occurred. It stemmed from the sixteenth century Roman Church, just as the Presbyterianism of Scotland did. To that extent, its Order is *eclectic*, just as the Presbyterian Order is eclectic. Its Catholicism is not Roman and it is not Orthodox. At this point, therefore, the logic of history admits of no absolute distinction in point of *authority* as between Anglican and Scottish systems. It is all a question of the merits of the two systems, the one clothing itself in the forms of a certain period in the history of the Church, the other in the forms of an age a few centuries further back, but both claiming plenary support for themselves in the order of the Undivided Church.

My point is that the theoretical distinction between "catholic" and "non-catholic" which is put forward in order to effect a first clearing-up of the ecumenical situation is too leaky to provide an adequate ecumenical criterion. The Anglican synthesis represents, in effect, a compromise—but one which, interpreted more largely and generously, might become for non-Roman Christendom the most potent instrument of ecumenical *rapprochement* which the world has to offer.

But if Anglicanism recognised more fully its compromise-character, it would at once become less stiff in the matter of *Intercommunion*. Anglicanism would come to see that it shares with the other Reformed Churches elements both of likeness and difference which it is already able to contain within itself. As a matter of fact the same differences of attitude towards the sacraments, towards the ministry and towards the whole principle of authority in the Church—High Church views and Low Church views—will be found to run transversely through many or most of the divided ecclesiastical communions, including the Church of England. And here I would quote some words of Mr Tomkins: "In so far as the honest pursuit of our differences reveals more and more points at which they do not fully coincide with our traditional, confessional divisions, we shall be forced, if we continue to be honest, to ask why we maintain divisions over matters which are in fact, at other points of time and space, found to be matters for debate *within* organically united Churches. Then either we must abandon our old divisions and form new ones—or we must abandon them for a greater unity." "It is not too paradoxical to suggest", he observes, "that our greatest hope may lie in our confusion."

I do not wish to overload this statement with further analysis of the situation. Enough, I think, has been said to make it evident that in the Ecumenical Conference we must turn our eyes to the *future* and to *the Fulness of the Church to be*, rather than to the past and its works. And we must leave off judging one another, and declaring things invalid which God may have willed to be valid for the good of His Church and for the accomplishment of His eschatological purpose. We can no more tidy up the past and reduce it to order than we can square the circle. But we can look to the future and to the Fulness of the Divine design for the Church if we entrust ourselves to the eschatological judgment of God on us and all our works, and cease erecting into absolutes what are to a large extent only contingencies and relativities of history.

We must, in other words, cease forcing the whole work and will of God for His Church into the moulds of pre-arranged generalisations, however widely based on period-history and however worthy of large acceptance these may be. We must no longer pronounce sentence so lightly on the validity of Orders and of Sacraments in the Church. So far I have said nothing of certain special points of debate which arise in conference between Scottish and Anglican representatives. Here on both sides there are the common claims (1) to continue the historic life of the Church of the ages under particular historical forms, (2) to maintain the dominical Sacraments and the Ministry originally instituted in the Church, (3) to retain the Episcopate and Apostolic Succession, though in somewhat different forms and perhaps with different notions of the extent to which the Apostles admit of being succeeded. Anglicans and Scottish Presbyterians take all of these positions. But I am also persuaded that we must both recognise the freedom of the Divine Sovereignty in the history of the Church. With reference to the Presbyterian insistence on *unity* in difference, and *continuity* in change throughout the events of the Reformation, it has to be said that most Reformed Churchmen and all serious theologians in Scotland would lay their *main* emphasis not on the evidences of continuity and succession within the historical process, however real these are, but on the mighty acts of God which, working above and through the earthly upheavals of Reformation history, procured the reform and survival of the

Church, and within the Church maintained the continuity of grace. Such theologians, moreover, though well enough alive to the effects produced in history by human *culpa* and by secular *injuria temporum* are less concerned about these accidents of Reform than about the fact that God's Church is His own, that it is subject to His will, that it is under His judgment, and that it is plastic to His touch (until the Parousia!) and that under such an eschatological economy life is wrought through resurrection, continuity through change, unity through difference, order through formal break with tradition. "I believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting." The Church's God is the God of the Resurrection.

This principle of the sovereign freedom in grace of the Divine government of history, above all in the matter of God's will for His Church, must therefore be given some place in the agenda of the ecumenical debate.

If then it should be proposed to us that we ought to resolve to seek together the Fulness of the Church to be, I would certainly say that we ought to accept that proposal, though well knowing what great historical difficulties will have to be overcome in that "long term" process of "growing together" and understanding each other. The terms of such an ultimate synthesis are not yet, save in vaguest outline, discernible. But I think before embarking on that definite journey, we would need to make it clear to one another:

(1) that we start from consideration of the Fulness of the Church which is to be, and not from any pronouncements on past history or with regard to the "validity" of Orders and Sacraments on either side; and

(2) that as an earnest of a new attitude to one another and in the interests of commending the "long term" policy of conference to the Churches, something should be done to relax the rigidity of the regulations and requirements hitherto governing the theory and practice of Intercommunion.

In a process governed by such intentions and inspired by such good will Eschatology and the Spirit might again come to their own in the Universal Church.

A WESLEYAN VIEW OF REUNION

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY METHODIST SOCIETY
31ST OCTOBER 1948

by THE REV. FRANZ HILDEBRANDT

THE Secretary has asked me, when inviting me to this meeting, to speak "of the nature of Methodism's contribution to Church Unity, or at any rate something with a definite Methodist tinge". In trying to comply with this request, let me make it clear that I shall speak as a Methodist, but only on my own behalf and without any kind of, or even hope for, official sanction; and I shall try to be definite. The Anglo-Saxon art of understatement is not easily mastered by one who is not British-born; to say, for instance, "I don't want to hurry you", when you are anxious to get rid of your visitor quickly, or "I shall not be a moment", when you intend to keep him waiting for the next few hours, or "I don't want to be uncharitable", when introducing the most devastating criticism of your opponent's view—in short, to indulge in what a recent article in *Lilliput* called "phrops", is a charisma, which, alas has not been given to me. Yet I will endeavour to speak the truth in love. My thoughts go back to one who, nearly ten years ago, spoke to the Methodist Society in this room and, though not a Methodist himself, gave me my earliest and most valued introduction to the Wesley hymns; who, second to none in his determination and outspokenness as a Free Churchman, yet commanded the affection and respect of Christians in many different camps and even had a requiem mass said for him in a Roman Catholic Church: the late Bernard Manning. I could not state my own view of reunion without first giving expression of my sense of indebtedness to him.

It will help to clear the ground if, from the beginning, we rule out what appears to me the wrong approach to our problem. Reunion cannot be understood in terms of, nor be achieved by means of, ecclesiastical diplomacy. Again and again, when negotiations are under way as they are now taking

place between the representatives of the various Free Churches and those of the Archbishop of Canterbury, we are told to leave the matter to our ambassadors who have our confidence and must not be disturbed; but when the scheme now under discussion has been worked out, we shall probably be told that it is now too late to raise our voice in protest or correction. Surely this is not the way. Protestantism reckons with the maturity of congregations and individual Christians, and reunion is the concern of the "ordinary" member of the Church who has a right to demand that the secrecy should be broken and the case be brought to the forum of the Christian public.

Secondly, reunion does not mean that there ought to be further mergers between two or more denominations. In his Cambridge Sermon of 1946 the Archbishop of Canterbury reduced the whole discussion of reunion to the issue of intercommunion, as in his opinion the time was not yet ripe for organic union; and this is the one statement in the sermon with which I would heartily agree. I can see no harm in the mere fact that there are different denominations; the harm lies only in their mutual exclusiveness; and I can see no hope in the mere fusion of separate bodies, as if that were an end in itself. "To frame a common confession of faith, or liturgy, or discipline, for both Churches is a project never to be accomplished. But to settle each so that the other shall declare it to be a sound part of the Catholic Church, and communicate with one another as such; this may easily be done without much difficulty by them abroad, and I make no doubt but the best and wisest of our Church would be be ready to give all due encouragement to it."[1]

If the real unhappiness of our divisions lies in the bar to intercommunion, it follows that there is no ultimate problem of reunion between Methodism and the other Free Churches and that what we have to say to each other on this particular occasion can be brief. For us all, at least in the four main nonconformist Churches, there is no fence around the Lord's table; the invitation is to all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. This is, of course, not to suggest that we have nothing, in this respect or others, to learn on either side. Let a few general indications suffice. Methodists will, in the first place,

[1] Archbishop Wake (1718), quoted in Dr Bell's *Christian Unity*, p. 62.

have to own that they *are* a Free Church. History has gone against John Wesley; his prophecy that God would withdraw His blessing after the Methodist separation from the mother church, has plainly not been fulfilled; his fear that "if they leave it then (sc. after Wesley's death), I expect they will gradually sink into a formal, honourable sect" (*Letters*, VIII, 66), has not been justified. And as we acknowledge our history, so we must also acknowledge our debt to the other Free Churches, particularly in the sphere of theology, and here notably to the Presbyterians; this is a field where they, and not we, have given the lead and where it is for us to prove our loyalty to the principles of the Reformation which we as a Church profess. There is last, but not least, the practical obligation upon us to co-operate in all good works and in the councils of the Church with our brethren in the other denominations; and with shame we may have to confess that all too often we have been found wanting, that it was Methodism which displayed a fatal tendency to withdraw into its own circle. Yes, let the other brethren remind us that we are a Free Church; and then let us remind them that we are a Church! For there are quite a number of points in which we ought not to follow the bad example of modern Nonconformity. The cause of Protestantism is not, for instance, to be identified with the theology of the wayside pulpit; nor again is it the independence of the individual, symbolised in the pathetic individual cups of the Free Church communion services, which should be written on the banner of Methodist churchmanship. In all these things we have suffered grievously through the influx of nineteenth and twentieth century waters into the wine of the Gospel; and it is time for us to halt the process of dilution and to restore the full substance of the faith which was once delivered unto the saints and handed down to us by the fathers of Methodism. What would Wesley have said, for example, to the shapelessness of our "Free Church" worship and the sorry round of our endless "anniversaries" which we have allowed to replace the beauty of the Prayer Book and the glory of the Church Year?

But it is as we turn to the Anglicans that our major troubles begin. Here lies the main burden of the reunion problem, and here it is necessary to go into the details of controversy before we can make constructive suggestions. "The Anglican Position"

has been fully and lucidly stated in the Bishop of Chichester's recent Upsala Lectures on "Christian Unity" (London, 1948). Free Churchmen in general and Methodists in particular will do well to study this book closely; and as we look at it, three decisive points will at once claim our attention. First, the Church of England is definitely not Protestant, but Protestant-Catholic with the all-important comprehensive hyphen; the Reformation is a period in her history, representing a possible point of view, but not a constitutive factor in her ecclesiastical life; it is, at best, a side issue, an event which may be as easily deplored or ignored by one party as it is hailed by another; and nothing is more characteristic of a sentence beginning "The Anglican Church is a Reformed Church" (p. 58) than the "but" which immediately follows to qualify this statement. It is clear, therefore, that Anglicanism, true to its nature, must pursue the policy of the *via media* in the ecumenical field and not move any nearer to the Churches of the Reformation than it is to the Roman Catholics and the Eastern Orthodox; no other course would be compatible with the vision of "ultimate" reunion. Secondly, and this is a key sentence in Dr Bell's book, "The unity of the Church is found in the unity of the episcopate". He asks: "What is the focus point which shall serve as the instrument of the visible unity? The answer is 'the College of Bishops' " (p. 179). A quotation from Cyprian, speaking of "the cement of concord in the solid unity of the Body" is expounded in the significant commentary: "The 'cement of concord' is the moral guarantee of unity amid variety of discipline; and the unity of the College of Bishops provides the best security for this" (p. 180). Thirdly, and again consequently, there is, in the Anglican view, a distinctive kind of grace attached to the different orders in the Church; so that when it comes to the practical consideration of mutual complementary commissions, even if the term "re-ordination" is anxiously avoided, "the man who had been episcopally ordained would add the grace of presbyterian ordination, and the man who had been presbyterially ordained would add the grace of episcopal ordination" (p. 145).

In any discussion of reunion or intercommunion these three fundamental Anglican presuppositions will have to be kept in mind; but before we say firmly No, as I am afraid we must,

even to so great and beloved a patron of the cause of unity on the episcopal bench, we ought, at least in passing, to take notice of a few other important aspects of his book. There is a curious divergence in the Anglican approach to the Free Churches on the one side and the Roman Church on the other. The Free Churches are told: "For any 'Church' to approach another with the demand: 'Our ministry is as good as yours, and you must recognise the fact, and that is all that is necessary', betrays an utterly wrong attitude to the whole question. The right attitude is: 'Our ministry fails of full catholicity (as yours does also), and we want you to supply our defect, so far as you can, from what you have'" (p. 144). The Roman Church is told, in the words of Archbishop Wake to Cardinal de Noailles: "I do not think my character at all inferior to that of an Archbishop of Paris; on the contrary, without lessening the authority and dignity of the Church of England, I must say that it is in some respects superior. If the Cardinal were in earnest for such a union, it would not be below him to treat with me himself about it. . . . And therefore, if they mean to deal with us, they must lay down this for a foundation, that we are to deal with one another on equal terms" (pp. 62 ff.). There is a similar divergence in the Anglican treatment of the Dissenters at home and the Protestants abroad; the former have willingly abandoned the blessings of episcopacy and thereby unchurched themselves, while the latter were deprived of it by force of circumstances and remained in communion with the Church of England.[1] Dr Bell makes a special point of mentioning that "it was with the Church of England and not with the Nonconformists that they were recognised as rightly having fellowship" (p. 186), and urges that, in accordance with this tradition, members of foreign Churches should be welcomed to Holy Communion when visiting England, and Anglicans in turn be allowed to communicate in Protestant Churches when

[1] Cf. Bell, op. cit., p. 186; ibid., p. 66, the quotation from Archbishop Wake: "The Lutherans do this very thing. Many of them communicate not only in prayers but take the Communion with us; and we never enquire whether they believe consubstantiation, or even pay any worship to Christ as present with the elements, so long as their outward actions are the same with our own, and they give no offence to any with their opinions." A significant concession, though hardly satisfactory from the Lutheran point of view in which agreement of "opinion" would always have to take precedence before uniformity of "outward actions".

abroad (p. 187). In this latter connexion it is, however, worth recalling the precedent of John Sharp, Archbishop of York, who "in the spring of 1704 said, in a speech to the House of Lords, that 'if he were abroad, he would willingly communicate with the Protestant Churches, where he should happen to be'. M. de la Mothe, a French pastor in London, wished to publish this statement, with others by other persons, and wrote to Atterbury asking him to procure Sharp's permission for publication. Sharp answered that 'if what I said was published to all the world, I should not retract it. But if my consent be asked about the publishing of it, I must needs say (for reasons you very well know) that I cannot readily give it'" (p. 45).[1] Here we have the true genius of Anglican diplomacy. And we have not forgotten what happened at Oslo in 1947 when the Anglican delegation had orders not to participate in the Lutheran communion service of the World Youth Conference, and again at Amsterdam in 1948 when only a few evangelical Bishops from overseas dared to receive the Sacrament in the Dutch Reformed Church. Even South India makes no difference to this attitude. While the Lambeth Conference of 1930 was still enthusiastic in its support for the new united Church, Lambeth 1948 was full of problems, misgivings and reservations. 1930 was the promise of a blessing; 1948 the avoidance of a ban. "I see no probability", writes the Bishop of Chichester, "of progress in Great Britain itself on the lines of an adaptation of the South India scheme . . . what may be possible in the mission field is no sound precedent for Britain" (pp. 117, 187). This is the third significant divergence.

We are now, I think, in a position to consider the immediate proposal for intercommunion which the Archbishop of Canterbury made in his Cambridge Sermon of 1946. Leaving aside all exegetical and technical questions which the text of the sermon raised in the minds of the experts, let us come straight to the main point of the scheme. As the diversity of our ministries

[1] It is interesting to note the comment of Sharp's son and biographer: "No doubt can be made but his reason for this was the ill use that would have been made of such a concession by our dissenters at home; and perhaps by some others, too, who, not considering the difference there is between the case of the Protestant Churches abroad and our dissenting congregations here in England, might argue loosely from it, that he could in point of conscience, were that only considered, occasionally conform to the Presbyterian way of worship in our meeting houses" (Bell, op. cit., p. 45).

is, in the Archbishop's eyes, the great obstacle to full intercommunion, he asks the Free Churches whether they would not be prepared as a first step, for the experiment of "taking episcopacy into their own system"; and we may take it that this has been the starting point for the conversations with Lambeth which have been in progress since. I am not concerned with the definition of episcopacy, but solely with the fact, when I say frankly and emphatically that it would be a real disaster for Methodism to adopt this suggestion. My reasons are these. First, it is not our fault that we have no intercommunion; it is not our ministry which raises the objection; it is not our Church which excludes Anglicans from its altars; and it is vital to say this as our very first word, that the whole problem is not of our making. Secondly, intercommunion is not a problem of orders; to start from here is to start from the wrong end; if we believe that this is the Lord's table, it is His presence alone which matters (and on which, indeed, it is essential to agree), not the title of the "presiding" minister. Was it not Hooker who wrote: "Every man knoweth that the matter of faith is constant, the matter contrariwise of action daily changeable, especially the matter of action belonging unto church polity" (op. cit., p. 18), and Whitgift, his patron who declared: "The ordering of ministers doth not appertain only to bishops . . . and it doth not therefore follow that there must always be one kind and form of government" (ib., p. 39)? Thirdly, the Bradford Conference of 1937, dealing with "the nature of the Christian Church according to the teaching of the Methodists", stated as "our conviction, that the continuity of the Church does not depend on, and is not necessarily secured by, an official succession of ministers, whether bishops or presbyters, from apostolic times, but rather by fidelity to apostolic truth. The office is contingent on the Word, and not the Word on the office. Indeed, the apparent discontinuity of office has sometimes been due to a reassertion of the true and essential continuity of experience, allegiance, message and mission." One can only hope that Methodism in 1948 will still remember what it said in 1937 and not be misled by Anglican tactics to shift the whole ground of the argument. It is not for us who are in the true apostolic succession to give proof of, or add weight to, the validity of our ministry; on the contrary it is for us to question a ministry

which, while boasting its pedigree (and that more loudly than the facts would seem to warrant), so largely fails to pass the apostolic test of steadfastly continuing in "doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread and prayers" (Acts 2.42). Roman orders, for instance, which are so meekly accepted by, and copied in, Anglicanism (though the love has never been reciprocal), are plainly invalid in the judgment of this text; and Roman priests are rightly reordained when entering the ministry of the Lutheran or Reformed Churches on the Continent. Anglicans, fourthly, should at least be examined, as they were by the Swedish Bishops when in 1922 Upsala entered into full communion with Canterbury, and when, in an excellent letter signed by Archbishop Soederblom and others, attention was drawn "to two points, which are to us more decisive than all others, with regard to the purity of the Christian doctrine, viz. the recognition of Scripture as *norma normans* both with regard to life and doctrine, and the building of our salvation on God's grace alone by faith" (Bell, *Documents of Christian Unity*, I, 189 ff.); and when also, incidentally, "instruction of the first communicants in the fundamentals of the Christian faith" was named as "an indispensable condition for Confirmation—a requirement that does not seem to be paid the same attention in the Anglican practice of Confirmation" (ib., p. 194). Fifthly, Bishops as such are perfectly harmless, as Methodists recognise by allowing for episcopal government among our American brethren. But it is when episcopacy is made the essential condition for reunion or intercommunion, that what the old Lutherans called the *status confessionis* arises: an order, neutral in itself, when imposed upon the Church, becomes the central issue of resistance. "We cannot doubt", says Bernard Manning to his fellow-Congregationalists, "that the Anglicans will offer sooner or later very favourable terms to the Methodists. They would meet the Methodists everywhere, except on the fundamental issue. The Methodists would have to admit that full salvation comes by bishops alone—but anything else that they want they would get. . . . It is the ancient battle fought by St. Paul against them of the circumcision which our fathers fought and which we fight. Is God's grace legally conditioned? Is episcopacy in the new dispensation what circumcision was in the old? Is episcopacy the essential channel for the full blessings

of the new Covenant in Christ as circumcision was the essential channel for the old Covenant in Moses? My friends in the Anglican Body do not like me to ask that question in those terms, because, asked in those terms, it answers itself. But that—shall there be a new circumcision, a new legalism, under the Gospel?—*is* the issue between us and the episcopalians, Anglican, Greek or Roman" (*Essays in Orthodox Dissent*, pp. 145, 142). One might well add the question: what would St. Paul have replied if Apollos had suggested supplementary ordination in the event of ministerial exchanges between Corinth and Ephesus? And even John Wesley had his misgivings when Francis Asbury became a Bishop in America: "One instance of this, of your greatness, has given me great concern. How can you, how dare you suffer yourself to be called Bishop? I shudder, I start at the very thought. Men may call me a knave or a fool, a rascal, a scoundrel, and I am content; but they shall never by my consent call me a Bishop! For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake put a full end to this! Let the Presbyterians do what they please, but let the Methodists know their calling better" (*Letters*, VIII, 91).

Finally, let us make sure that in our rejection of the Anglican advances we put first things first and do not take our stand upon the non-essentials of Methodism. The first things to defend are the purity and freedom of the Gospel and the scriptural administration of the sacraments, the "sufficient, sovereign, saving grace" by which we live; the non-essentials are the changeable features of Methodist (or any other) polity. Conference, itinerancy and circuit system were the great expedients in Wesley's day, and we find them expedient still; but their usefulness is subject to revision as circumstances require, and they are certainly not the shibboleth of Methodism, the fetish for which we have to fight to the last ditch. Would that the people of God called Methodists were as keen on their doctrines as they commonly are on their organisation and were able to realise that the much-invoked "genius" of our founder lies precisely in the flexibility of his system, coupled with the firmness of his faith!

If, then, we are sure of our ground and clear about the relevance of Bernard Manning's story of the circumcision, it follows that we cannot come to terms with our Anglican breth-

ren till they have repented of their errors, reformed their course and returned into the true apostolic succession. Is it presumptuous that the daughter should thus talk to the mother Church? Or is it not rather time for us to remember that the mother Church, during the last hundred years, has gone astray beyond the wildest fears of Wesley and ceased to show the face which he could recognise? The Church of England, for him and for Charles who would not leave her in life and in death, was the Church of the Prayer Book, the Articles and the Homilies, the Church of the English Reformation; with this Church Methodists would feel at home and long to be in communion. At least, they ought so to feel and to long; and it would be better for us to recover the true treasures of our Anglican inheritance in the devotional life of Methodism than to bargain as a foreign "body" about the price of episcopacy.

Here, at last, we come to indicate the positive direction which the Methodist contribution to reunion should take. "We want union with all," writes Bernard Manning (op. cit., p. 141); "but we do not want it at any price." Archbishop Wake, to quote once more from Dr Bell's book (p. 63), declared: "I am a friend to peace; but more to Truth." And the Wesleys had their own way of speaking the truth in love. When Charles went through the bitter experience of "his son Samuel's perversion to popery", he poured out his grief in a pathetic poem of twenty-six verses, of which I will quote only two:

> Farewell, my all of earthly hope,
> My nature's stay, my age's prop,
> Irrevocably gone!
> Submissive to the will divine,
> I acquiesce, and make it mine;
> I offer up my son!
>
> See the true ancient Church appears,
> Peter's unerring successors,
> Who Christ and God disown!
> Adulterers and murderers rise,
> And monsters of unnatural vice
> Adorn the papal throne. . . .

But from the same pen (or was it John's?) came the "word to a Protestant", which indeed one feels tempted to send in to the Protestant Truth Society:

But, O my gracious God, to me
A better spirit impart,
The gentle mind that was in Thee,
The meekly loving heart,
The heart whose charity o'erflows
To all, far off, and near;
True charity to friends and foes,
Impartially sincere.
Heathens, and Jews, and Turks, may I,
And heretics embrace;
Nor e'en to Rome the love deny
I owe to all the race.

Look, for an exact parallel, at John Wesley's Dublin "Letter to a Roman Catholic" in comparison with his "Roman Catechism and a reply thereto" (or "Popery Calmly Considered") and see how he, too, is able to hold together the uncompromising zeal for the truth with the charity that beareth, believeth, hopeth and endureth all things.

But how is this possible? Only on the basis of "Reformation" as the guiding principle of the Church; on the assumption of our unqualified readiness to be, in every age and on every day, "re-formed" by the Word of God. To by-pass this decision is to evade the truth and to refuse repentance; and as tradition without scripture can never make us free, so reunion without reformation will never make us one. What is the fundamental lesson of that great ecumenical chapter John 17, if not this that by the Word the disciples are distinguished from the world, by the Word they are preserved and sanctified, by the Word they will make the world believe, and by the Word they shall all be one in Christ? The measure of our willingness to listen to this Word is the measure of our true unity; New Testament scholars have long proved that the nearer they draw to their text, the nearer they draw to each other, and who cares to know the author's denomination when consulting a really good commentary? Let Methodists glory in the fact that the two official "confessions" of our Church—unique among the great denominations—are exegetical documents: Wesley's Standard Sermons and the Notes on the New Testament; let no official discouragement mislead us to neglect the latter, and let no higher critic get away with his sneers at Wesley's so-called "literalism"—which is one of his strongest points!

And there is a further, specifically Methodist, principle, indeed an application of the first, which we must bring to bear upon the quest and work for reunion. It is what I should like to call the test of the ultimate question. Wesley, in his dealings with men and women of all sects and parties, knew how to reduce the issue to the one decisive point: What is it in you and me that matters in the sight of God? What, to use his own language, will save us from the wrath to come? "I care not at all for one opinion or another," he writes to his prodigal nephew Samuel, "I care not who is head of the Church, provided you be a Christian!" (*Letters*, VIII, 47). So he gives us the Magna Charta of Ecumenicity in his sermon on the Catholic Spirit:

> I do not mean, "Embrace my modes of worship; or, I will embrace yours". This also is a thing which does not depend either on your choice or mine. We must both act as each is fully persuaded in his own mind. Hold you fast that which you believe is most acceptable to God, and I will do the same. I believe the Episcopal form of Church government to be scriptural and apostolical. If you think the Presbyterian or Independent is better, think so still, and act accordingly. I believe infants ought to be baptised; and that this may be done either by dipping or sprinkling. If you are otherwise persuaded, be so still, and follow your own persuasion. It appears to me, that forms of prayer are of excellent use, particularly in the great congregation. If you judge extemporary prayer to be of more use, act suitable to your own judgment. My sentiment is, that I ought not to forbid water, wherein persons may be baptised; and that I ought to eat bread and drink wine, a memorial of my dying Master: However, if you are not convinced of this, act according to the light you have. I have no desire to dispute with you one moment upon any of the preceding heads. Let all these smaller points stand aside. Let them never come into sight. "If thine heart is as my heart", if thou lovest God and all mankind, I ask no more: "Give me thine hand" (cf. 2 Kings 10.15).

Thus the Methodist, in accordance with apostolic practice, extends the right hand of fellowship to all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity (Eph. 6.24), remembering that the original form of our own Church was that of the "Society", the Society "meeting, giving thanks, praying, parting", whose mission is "to spread life among all denominations; which they will do, as Wesley adds," "till they form a separate sect" (*Letters*, VIII, 211). Or, in another significant letter: "It has been the glory of Methodists to assist all parties without forming any. In so doing, God has abundantly blessed them . . . and if they abide by their old rules, God will give them His

blessing" (*Letters*, VIII, 71). This ecumenical predisposition which we owe to our existence as society can still be utilised in joint evangelistic action with the other Churches. The Commando Campaigns, initiated by Methodism, are proof of this. In common work for the common Lord we find our unity. Missions at home and abroad all teach the same lesson.

> We for Christ, our Master, stand,
> Lights in a benighted land:
> We our dying Lord confess;
> We are Jesu's witnesses.

And one particular Methodist note, far too seldom heard, of this common witness is the Pauline and Wesleyan "plainness of speech", our share in, and lead to, the "nonconformist conscience", our duty to exercise our public ministry to the nation and the world, and to call rulers and ruled into the obedience of Christ.

I am not forgetting the Methodist polity in this connexion. There is a profound ecumenical significance in the circuit system and the itinerant ministry. We only have to extend its scope beyond the borders of one country and denomination to see great new possibilities. When you are transferred, for instance, as I was, from one circuit of the universal Church (the Lutheran) to another (the Methodist) with no more ceremony to mark the occasion than is known at any "ordinary" translation inside the British Methodist Connexion, then you begin to appreciate the true Catholic meaning of ordination and the reality of the one ministry which must be recognised throughout the whole Body of Christ.

But the greatest treasure which Methodism has to offer as its contribution to reunion remains, of course, our Hymn Book. There is no time for more than the merest hint at the riches of the doctrine of the Church which are hidden in these lines and from which most other hymn books have tried to borrow one or two fragments to cover their own poverty. Think of the impulse to reunion in the opening phrase of "Let us join—'tis God commands"; of the coming together under the Word of God in a verse such as this:

> Touched by the loadstone of Thy love
> Let all our hearts agree,
> And ever towards each other move,
> And ever move toward Thee;

of the description, which is so strangely up-to-date, of the faithful remnant in the Church under the cross:

> All are not lost or wandered back;
> All have not left Thy Church and Thee;
> There are, who suffer for Thy sake,
> Enjoy the glorious infamy,
> Endure the scandal of the cross,
> And only seek divine applause;

of the union between the Church militant and triumphant:

> One family, we dwell in Him,
> One Church, above, beneath,
> Though now divided by the stream,
> The narrow stream, of death;

and of the final consummation when "names and sects and parties fall; Thou, O Christ, art all in all".

Here we must leave Charles Wesley. One more word, however, has to be said in conclusion without which our picture would not be complete. As we try to stir up the gift which is within us, to use the capital entrusted to us by our fathers for the service of the universal Church, in the study of the Word, the urge to conversion, the prophetic and evangelistic witness, the work of charity and administration, the praise of God in our hymns, we can never afford to neglect the supreme means of grace which our Lord Himself has ordained for us to the very end that we may all be one: the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The Wesleys learned and taught that this is what they called a converting, not only a confirming, ordinance; and they practised what they preached about the duty of constant communion. If we believe that the sacrament is a means of grace, we have to employ it as such in the cause of which we speak, and there is no excuse whatever for the Church to suspend full intercommunion till by design or permission of men we have been all made one. I appeal to you, my brethren, to seize the priceless opportunity which is yours in the school and college chapels where you have access, irrespective of denomination, to the communion service and where even some of us Free Church ministers have been happy, from time to time, to assist our Anglican brethren in the celebration. The fellowship here established should be continued and, indeed, be extended; what is possible in the college chapel or at students' conferences and

what was once, incidentally, the regular annual practice of the now defunct Madingley Group at Cambridge, is also practicable in the Church at large. It is for us, as Methodists, to take the initiative in inviting to such joint communions all those who in the Anglican body believe with us in the real presence of the risen Lord and in the scriptural administration of His holy sacrament. Others who practise the Roman Mass in Anglican Parish Churches are not waiting for episcopal dispensation on their unlawful action; they present the hierarchy with a *fait accompli* and nobody dares to stop them. Why should Evangelicals leave the field to them? Why should they not take the law, nay, the Gospel, into their own hands and wrest the work of reunion from the files of ecclesiastical diplomats? The warning against the slow and secret moves of official machinery with which we began is reinforced by an extract from John Wesley's *Journal* (1st June 1777):

> Mr Corbett said, he would gladly have asked me to preach, but that the Bishop had forbidden him; who had also forbidden all his Clergy, to admit any Methodist Preacher to the Lord's Supper. But is any Clergyman obliged, either in law or conscience, to obey such a prohibition? By no means. The will even of the King does not bind any English subject, unless it be seconded by an express law. How much less the will of a Bishop? "But did you not take an oath to obey him?" No, nor any Clergyman in the three kingdoms. This is a mere vulgar error. Shame that it should prevail almost universally.

I am conscious of the fateful date on which we have met this night: 31st October 1517 was the day when Luther nailed his ninety-five theses to the door of the Schlosskirche at Wittenberg, the day which marks the beginning of the Reformation. You may well tell me that what I have presented to you is really the Lutheran view of reunion. Yes, it is Lutheran—as well as Wesleyan; for there is no fundamental difference between these two. We are still, as Methodists, in duty bound to the principles of the Reformation; and our position is still determined by that scene at Worms, where Luther, faced with Kaiser and Pope, had to answer the two questions: Were those books in front of him his own, and was he willing to recant what he had written in them? He asked for twenty-four hours notice, and then returned to reply that the books indeed were his, but that he could not recant, unless he were convicted of his errors by clear proof of scripture and reason. There we stand

with him; owning the books of the Reformers and the Wesleys as ours, willing to have them revised and corrected any day by clear proof of scripture and reason, but committed to resist any other doctrine, statute or scheme which the powers of men, be it even for the sake of reunion, would impose upon us. "Here I stand; I can none other; God help me, Amen." But remember: 31st October, when Luther held his disputation, was chosen as the eve of All Saints' Day—"a day, that I peculiarly love", as Wesley says in his *Journal*. There is no discrepancy between the two dates and their messages. For Reformation, as we have seen, is the necessary prelude to, and criterion for, all true Reunion. And only as we are faithful to the decision of 31st October, are we able to join, with understanding, in the great Collect for All Saints' Day:

O Almighty God, who hast knit together Thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of Thy Son Christ our Lord: Grant us grace so to follow Thy blessed Saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys, which Thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE MAKING OF A LITURGY

by The Rev. L. W. BROWN

This article contains a brief account of the way in which the eucharistic liturgy of the Church of South India was drawn up and indicates some of the points about which opinions differed among the representatives of the different traditions sharing in this task.

When the Church was inaugurated on 27th September 1947 it had no intention to compile a liturgy of its own, but it soon became clear that a new Communion Service was most desirable, if not absolutely necessary, for use on occasions when members of a diocese drawn from several different traditions met together. The Church very rapidly became conscious of itself as a united body and wished for some expression in its worship of the unity which was transcending the differences of tradition within it. The Executive Committee of Synod therefore asked the Liturgy Committee to prepare a form of service for use in the first place at the second Synod of the Church.

The Committee first considered whether it would be possible to adapt a liturgy already widely used in the Church. This meant in effect the Communion Service of the Book of Common Prayer which was already used by over two-thirds of our members, those who had been Anglicans or Methodists. We very soon came to the conclusion that our new wine needed a new bottle and decided to prepare a new form including all the elements mentioned in Chapter X of our Constitution. We agreed on certain principles by which we should be guided. The first is that we should try to be faithful throughout to the Holy Scriptures. They contain the apostolic tradition which we all acknowledge and are accepted as authoritative in matters of faith by all in the Church. In the expression of our faith in worship we should certainly try to express clearly the faith of the Scriptures and no other. We thought it would also help our people to accept the new liturgy and to understand it if its language was also as scriptural as possible. Perhaps we

can claim to be true to this principle even in the name of the service which is the Lord's Supper or the Holy Eucharist.

The second thing we have tried to do is to make this service an act of the whole people of God in the place where it is used. We have tried to make the service as complete as we can and we hope it will never be used as an "early service" attended by the pious few only, or an "after service" regarded as secondary to a preaching service preceding it. Our service includes the reading and preaching of God's Word, the singing of hymns and intercessory prayer as well as the Communion proper. We have expressed the hope that all communicant members of the Church will take part in every celebration. This is not so impossible an ideal as it may sound to English churchmen because in South India there is such a shortage of presbyters that it is only in a comparatively few town parishes that a weekly celebration is possible and this is usual only in churches of the Anglican tradition. Many churches celebrate Holy Communion only once a quarter and in ex-Anglican parish churches a celebration on one Sunday in the month is probably normal. On other Sundays the presbyter is visiting other churches in his pastorate. We have provided a very large part for the congregation throughout the service, even in the Eucharistic Prayer. We have also asked that deacons (a term which for this purpose includes laymen who may be asked to do this work) should lead parts of the service.

It has also been our endeavour to preserve features perhaps peculiar to one tradition but dear to people brought up in that way. We have, for example, included the "warrant", the reading of part of 1 Corinthians 11, stating clearly our authority for the action of the service, but we have transferred it to the preparatory part of the service where it serves also as an exhortation for examination and confession. We also suggested that Communion might be received in "tables", a Methodist practice. Criticism may be made of the fact that there are very few distinctively Indian features in the service. A theologian of the Swiss Reformed Church has said, "I have been eagerly looking for some particularly Indian features in the liturgy—not for the sake of folk-lore peculiarities but simply because there can be no Christian or ecclesiastical strait-waistcoat, but I have not found anything reminiscent of India to show us 'this is how in

India the Gospel is accepted and believed'. . . . If—as I presume—Indians also belong to the Church in India then we need not talk exactly of elephants and of the holy Ganges with her cows, but somehow there ought to be a real expression of life in India. A Christian is not dehumanised but can really be man, *hic et nunc*." We realise the force of this criticism but our Church has not become unified enough in three years of life to be able to speak with a single voice. It is an Indian Church and it will develop its own theology and know exactly what it wishes to say in its praise of God. Then it will speak with an Indian voice and we eagerly look forward to that day. There is however a universal basic element in all liturgy. There are a few features which perhaps we may claim as being especially congenial to India—the large element of praise, the periods of silence and the Peace.

The Committee first drew up a service based on these principles and sent it to all the dioceses of the Church and to scholars in the Mother Churches for their comments. The reaction of some of the dioceses was unexpected. They used the draft liturgy at various services and became so firmly attached to it that all subsequent revision in the light of criticism was unwelcome. It was rather astonishing to find the liturgy attaining such a place in people's affection after only one use. Comments from abroad were most helpful. The Committee prepared the final draft in December 1949, and it was used and approved at the Synod in January 1950. It will be used in the Church for two years and then comments and criticisms will again be invited so that the next Synod can approve a liturgy which will truly represent the mind of the Church at this stage of its unification and development.

It is hoped that a preparatory service will be held in the week preceding the celebration, either in the church or in houses in various parts of the parish. Some Presbyterians questioned this provision on the ground that it made for infrequent celebration of the Communion but we feel strongly there is great danger in India of taking the service as a matter of course or regarding it as of little real importance for Christian life. We think that this Reformed practice provides a real safeguard against wrong ideas about the Sacrament and a great opportunity of instructing people. As I have already said there are

comparatively few churches in the Church of South India where there is a presbyter available to celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly.

We have recommended that where possible the presbyter shall stand behind the Lord's Table to conduct the service. This position allows all his actions to be seen and is the practice of the Congregational and Reformed elements in our Church. This rubric was warmly welcomed by some. A Swiss comment is that it makes the Service less rigid and takes away from the conception of communion as an act of magic, but there was considerable opposition from some Methodists, one of whom says, "this position of the celebrant seems to me to deny the essential truth that 'in every Communion the true celebrant is Christ alone' (Basis of Union, page 5) and that therefore the minister approaches the Holy Table, as the representative of the people, and receives Communion as they do." Anglicans also opposed this change in their custom on more or less the same grounds. They also found it awkward when prayers are offered by other people, during the course of the service, which appear to be directed to the minister kneeling behind the Lord's Table.

The Liturgy starts with preparation for the right receiving of God's Word and of the Sacrament. After a prayer for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, *Gloria in Excelsis*, restored to its earliest form, is sung or said. This hymn is suggested because it leads from worship to penitence, but another hymn of praise may be used instead. The presbyter then reads 1 Corinthians 11.23-9: and he may add another exhortation. There is then a period of silence, followed by a confession and the verses which are called in the Book of Common Prayer and the Book of Common Order the "Comfortable Words of our Saviour Christ". Some difficulty was felt about the introductions given to these words in the Prayer Book as it is not certain John 3.16 gives Christ's own words, nor that St. Paul wrote 1 Timothy 1.15. We therefore introduce them generally by "Hear the gracious words of God to all who truly turn to him through Christ", and give no particular introductory biddings. After these words there is a declaration of God's forgiveness which may be also used in the form of a prayer. It is the form in the Prayer Book, with the addition of a clause

recalling that forgiveness of our brethren is a condition of our receiving forgiveness.

The second part of the service, The Ministry of the Word of God, then starts. In the first draft of the service different introductions were provided for the readings from the Old Testament, the Epistle, and the Gospel, and the people sat for the first two but stood for the last. Strong objection was taken to this on the grounds that it implied a different standing for the gospels from that of the other parts of the Scripture. Anglicans and others felt strongly that this traditional distinction in the liturgy should be maintained but it was eventually decided to introduce all the readings in the same way—"Hear the Word of God as it is written in . . . "—and not to specify who should read each portion. The readings are followed immediately by the sermon which is an essential part of the service. Its intention is not moral uplift or liturgical instruction but the proclamation of the living Word of God. The hearing of the sermon is itself an important act of worship. It is followed by a united confession of faith in the words of the Nicene or Apostles' Creed.

Several forms are provided for intercession. Two of them are litanies and the people pray "Hear us, we beseech thee" after each petition. The presbyter sums up the litany with the Anglican post-communion collect "Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom . . . ". One of these litanies is from the Ceylon Liturgy, the other from the Inauguration Service of the Church. It is allowed that extempore prayer be offered instead of a set intercession and subjects for such prayer are suggested. After a blessing any excommunicate persons must leave the church, but all of communicant status are expected to stay to partake of the Eucharist.

The third part of the service is called The Breaking of Bread. After sentences recalling our unity in Christ the Peace may be given. This custom has never lapsed in the ancient Syrian Church of Malabar but with them it starts as an elaborate ceremony connected with the altar and censer and has to some people a strong flavour of passing some magic power from the altar through the priest to the people. Our intention is to use this sign, a touch of the hands passed from presbyter to people, and from each worshipper to those near him, only as

an outward gesture of fellowship in Christ. A Methodist experiencing this for the first time wrote of the great effect it had on a large congregation and spoke of "the glad surprise" of the Peace. It is a ceremony which we consider thoroughly scriptural and edifying but which is not an essential part of the liturgy. During the singing of a hymn the gifts of the people are brought to the presbyter, as well as the bread and wine necessary for the sacrament, and are placed on the Lord's Table. The first draft gave an offertory prayer which started by a reference to Hebrews 10.19 and went on to offer our gifts and ourselves in the words of the Prayer Book first post-communion collect. This action was unacceptable to the theologians of Basel who saw in it an attempt to give man something to sacrifice—an action which he could do towards God. One scholar wrote: "The offertory . . . is appalling. Already in the Mass it has lost the original meaning it had in the ancient Church, and it has to be symbolised today. Still worse is the rôle of this element in the Anglo-Saxon liturgies, from which it cannot be exterminated. According to Zwingli the thing that is meant here ought to find its place after the sermon and Calvin would agree to that. In Communion it (the reference is to the dedication of ourselves in connexion with the gifts) should at least not be placed before but after the administration of Communion, because otherwise the Sacrament is misinterpreted. This whole idea of sacrifice is sticking so deep in the heads of nearly all Anglo-Saxon liturgiologists that to fight against it would be, though piquant, absolutely hopeless." We have now retained only a very simple prayer at this place and make the offering of ourselves later, in what seems to us also its theologically correct place, after the commemoration of God's mighty acts in Christ and our humble receiving of sonship and grace from God in Holy Communion. While the Reformed wished to leave out all mention of sacrifice from the liturgy, others, approaching the matter from a more pastoral point of view, were most anxious to have what they called "a real offertory" to teach the people the importance of giving to the work of God. The late Bishop of Dornakal was very insistent on the need for this and gave ceremonial emphasis to this act in his cathedral services. Many much regret our omission of phrases which certainly, on the

face of it, have scriptural warrant, like "our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving".

The Prayer of Thanksgiving starts with the salutation and *sursum corda* and has a general preface commemorating God's work in creation for use when a proper preface is not provided. We proposed to model the first part of the prayer on the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, but there was objection to this, not because of doctrinal difficulties but because it was felt that the form in the Prayer Book with its very strong emphasis on the uniqueness of Christ's sacrifice upon the Cross was as much needed in India, with its background of Hindu sacrificial ideas, as it was in the days of the Reformation, when it was used to combat a false doctrine of Eucharistic sacrifice. Although some much preferred a form which did not appear to bind the Church of South India to an Anselmian view of the atonement we decided to use the Prayer Book words. A point which has caused distress to Anglicans is that we have not ordered detailed manual acts to accompany Christ's words of institution. This is partly to make it easier for the Reformed to accept the service, and partly because we wished to return to the simplest action of the rite, in view of the great danger of magical ideas springing from a non-Christian background. The presbyter takes the bread and cup into his hands and performs no other ceremony, as is directed also in the 1549 Prayer Book. After the words of institution the congregation breaks into the prayer, saying, "Amen, thy death O Lord we commemorate, thy resurrection we confess and thy second coming we await, have mercy on us", and the presbyter then goes on to an *anamnesis* of our Lord's Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension and expresses our intention in the service to do this in remembrance of Christ as He has commanded. We deliberately changed the first draft which spoke of us "setting forth this memorial" because almost any form of words, other than that of Christ Himself, is liable to misunderstanding. After another interjection of praise by the people we ask the Father to sanctify with His Holy Spirit us and His gifts of bread and wine "that the bread which we break may be the communion of the Body of Christ, and the cup which we bless the communion of the Blood of Christ". Here we have prayed for the working of the Holy Spirit in the words and conceptions of Scripture, as we

understand it. This part of the prayer closes with a petition taken from Ephesians 4.13, 15. All say "Amen" and then sum up their thanks and prayers in the Lord's Prayer. After a period of silence the Prayer of Humble Access from the Prayer Book is said by all together. We have changed the last sentence of this to pray that our sinful bodies and souls may be made clean by His precious Body and Blood. From the point of view of English this change is unfortunate but the meaning of the Prayer Book prayer is obscure. Then the presbyter rises and breaks the Bread in silence and the communion follows immediately. We have given a number of alternative words for the administration and we have not directed any particular manner in which communion should be administered. Perhaps a word should be said here about one suggestion—that communion from the cup should be given with a spoon. This has no doctrinal significance at all. Most people in village India do not place their lips to a drinking vessel but pour its contents into their mouths without touching it. This presents certain difficulties at Holy Communion and means that a very large quantity of wine is required even for a small congregation. As most of the churches are very poor this is a great difficulty. The use of the spoon is congenial to the habits of the people and it is most economical. It does not touch the lips.

The service finishes with a call to thanksgiving, praise for the grace and status God has given us through Christ, and our offering of ourselves as a sacrifice to God, in Christ and through Christ, praying that we may know and obey His will in our daily life. The people respond with Revelation 7.12 and the service comes to an end with the blessing and a hymn of thanksgiving.

Two difficulties presented themselves immediately we had finished the form of service. In the Church there is as yet no agreed sacramental doctrine and the question of what to do with the consecrated elements *post usum* was not easy of solution. All the Anglicans without exception reacted very strongly to the suggestions made from other sides—that the elements left over should be kept and used next time; or at least the wine could be poured back into the bottle, or they could just be thrown away. The non-Anglicans, however, saw no irreverence or impropriety in this and accused the Anglicans of a belief in

transubstantiation. The Anglican difficulty is not easy to defend theologically perhaps, but it has very tenacious roots. Things which have become "holy" not by intrinsic change but because they have been brought into God's use cannot thereafter be put to ordinary uses. So the elements left over from communion must be disposed of at once, reverently, even though they are no longer used for the Sacrament. We have not really dealt with this difference of outlook. We have directed that such elements be removed to the vestry and have suggested that they should there be consumed, but we have not made this a definite rule, as many wished.

Another difficulty is that of giving instructions for taking and blessing more bread and wine if the elements are used up in communion and more are required. The practice of most Reformed elements is to take more bread and wine as required but to use no further prayer of blessing. No directions are given in the 1662 Prayer Book, but the common Anglican practice is to repeat the appropriate part of the words of institution. Roman theologians apparently consider it blasphemous to consecrate either element separately. We have no theory of a particular moment of consecration of the elements; we believe God takes and blesses them for this use in response to the prayer of His people, as we bless His name for our redemption in Christ. It would seem unreal to repeat the whole prayer and we have accordingly made provision for more bread or wine to be brought within the eucharistic action by a simple formula—"Obeying the command of our Lord Jesus Christ we take this bread (this wine) to be set apart for this holy use in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." An alternative is allowed, in that the Words of Institution may be repeated.

We realise that we may find by the experience of the Church that many changes in our Service are desirable, but we are very thankful for the way in which people of many traditions have already been able to join heartily in it, and to find it a form which leads their hearts and minds to the Saviour.

ECUMENICAL CONVERSATIONS[1]

their Theological Significance and Justification

by The Rev. W. SCHWEITZER

At the end of February 1950 there was published a directive from the Vatican concerning the rules to be observed by Roman Catholics on the occasion of ecumenical conversations. These show clearly how seriously such conversations are taken in that quarter. The line of thought developed in the following pages is not intended as a critical analysis and discussion of the Vatican declaration; it was complete in writing before that was published. Our aim here is rather to consider in a general way elements of difficulty and promise in ecumenical conversations. Of course the following reflections are purely private in character although they do endeavour to give due weight to a variety of experience gained within the Ecumenical Movement and also in the struggle of the Confessional Church in Germany. It would perhaps be in the interest of the Ecumenical Movement if we can come to see clearly and without illusions what are the limits that are set here to all human efforts and at the same time try to direct our view to the Lord of the Church, who alone can bring about the unification of Christendom.

I

All interconfessional conversations are sustained by the desire to serve the reunion of Christendom. What makes these conversations difficult is the fact that unity, particularly in the sphere of the Church, is impossible so long as we avoid the problem of truth. Genuine *unity* can be grounded only in the *truth*. But it is just this question of truth that is answered differently by the different partners in ecumenical conversations. Strict adherence to the truth seems bound to wreck every effort to restore unity. How are we in the Ecumenical Movement, which seeks the unity of the Church of Christ, to settle the question of truth? This is the question.

[1] Translated by the Rev. J. C. Campbell, Dunottar.

At first sight it looks as if there were only two possible ways of doing justice to the question of truth in the ecumenical world:

(*a*) First way: we take up the viewpoint that the truth as we have come to know it, is absolute. Among the youth of the Evangelical Church in Germany a hymn is often sung with these words:

> A charge to keep our God has given
> The treasure of His Truth.

Yet this only leads us to the attitude that brands all rigid confessionalists, whether they have their home in Rome or elsewhere. In so far as such people occupy themselves with the problem of unity at all, their aim can only be to absorb the other Confessions.

(*b*) The other possibility seems to be to make in a spirit of resignation and generosity the admission: We all know the truth in part only. *The* truth itself would then come as a result from the combination of the individual insights into a single whole, as for example in an Ecumenical Council of the Churches. In practice this means seeking a unity based on formulae of compromise pure and simple. It ought, however, to be clear that this method can only find the support of Christians who in the last resort are no longer sure about the substance of their faith. As soon as one begins to talk about partial truths instead of *the* Truth it is in the long run hardly possible to avoid putting scriptural doctrine on the same plane with heresy, and not only that but one has to throw open the gates of this fellowship to Buddhists and Mohammedans too, and indeed to all so-called "religiously disposed" people. In a word we end up in syncretism. Talk of a harmony of partial truths comes in the end to the same thing as a surrender of truth itself. For a Church to be willing to live on partial truths, or to imagine it can do so, is to give in. An Ecumenical Movement which did likewise would immediately cease to be a movement towards the goal of the one Church of Christ. In such a case we would not be building up the Church on the truth, but the tower of Babel on the lie of a fictitious unity.

Two questions arise out of what has been said: Why is this inevitably the case in the Church? and: Is there perhaps a third possibility, a possibility through which the individual Confessions neither posit as absolute the truth entrusted to them, nor

thoughtlessly relativise it, which in the end means forgoing all claim to the truth?

If we want to find the right answer to this we must first of all face the question: What is meant here, in the realm of the Church, among the followers of Christ, by "truth"? In marked contrast to the human quest for truth, which is never quite sure of itself and therefore knows only of relative "truths", we hear in Scripture the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: "I am the way, the truth and the life." The truth here confronts man not simply in the shape of concepts or a world view, but as a person. When we answer "Yes" to Him, we are "in the truth"; when we say "No" to Him, we can only hesitate in the sceptical attitude of Pilate. Here we have to make a decision. This is the real problem of truth. Nor is it only timid seekers after truth who are confronted here with the necessity of a clear decision, but religious people too who are confident of already possessing the truth. In John 8 it says expressly that Jesus said to the Jews "who believed on him": "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Notice how these words at once release a storm of indignation, for these men wanted to hold on to traditional "truths", but not to accept grace and truth from Him who stood before them as their Saviour.

Christ is the truth. For that reason a Christian, a Confession, the Ecumenical Movement can give only one answer when the question of truth is raised: "I believe that Jesus Christ . . . very God . . . and very man . . . is my Lord" (Luther). In Him is the truth—and in confessing Him we are one, the tension between truth and unity is released. Strict adherence to the truth cannot therefore wreck our endeavours after unity, but in truth—yes in truth—can only be of service to them.

It is now apparent that everything depends on whether we —particularly in our endeavours for reunion—really seek to abide "in Him". That is to say we must really acknowledge *Him* and what *He* says, stand by *His* Word, for only when we are to be found exactly in this situation are we really also one with our brethren of other Confessions and other lands. There we do not need to start looking for unity, for there indeed it is already in existence. We are bidden to believe in this unity in

the truth, and it is the aim of the Ecumenical Movement to give expression to this faith, i.e. the full assurance that this unity is in existence among us. The Holy Spirit does indeed lead individual Christians into the truth. But this is not all. In the very act of so doing, He is in fact gathering into one the "whole Christian family on earth". This unity in truth is graciously bestowed on us in Christ and the earnest desire of the Ecumenical Movement is to make its members ever ready to receive this gift. In the ecumenical discussion, therefore, when all is said and done, we can only call one another to repentance and return to Him, so that in His sight we may be counted worthy to receive this gift of unity. Here each must inexorably question and examine the other, in order to find whether his action, his preaching and his doctrine is really rooted and grounded in Christ. Where this contention for the truth takes place ecumenical conversations will again and again bring Christians over all the world together in such a way that in genuine unity as the Church of Christ they will testify to His glory, "a glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth".

What guiding lines for inter-confessional conversations do these insights yield?

2

Let us first turn our attention to the inter-confessional doctrinal conversations. The question here is about the mutual relationship of the different theological systems, although it must be said right away that their points of difference do not coincide with the differences between the Confessions, but cut right across them. This doctrinal discussion is not carried on for its own sake but serves the ultimate aim of achieving a common proclamation of the Gospel. As distinct from the attempt to effect a unified presentation of the Gospel message here and now (see below, Part 3), we are concerned here with the principles and norms of this proclamation of the Gospel and with questions dealing with the proper form of the Church itself. We recalled earlier the words of the hymn:

> A charge to keep our God has given
> The treasure of His Truth.

What is to be the course of action for each Confession, for the

individual Lutheran or Presbyterian, Anglican, Orthodox or Roman Catholic Christian with such words on his lips? At all events they are not to think of trying to dispose of this treasure at the highest or lowest possible price. On the contrary they are really to "keep" it, i.e. see to it that it remains a real treasure.

Individual Confessions are not then asked to retrace every step which, having been made in the service of different insights into the truth, has also led to the unhappy divisions of Christendom. Rather it is for each Confession through exchanges with the others to try to deepen its faith, and this means also deepening its knowledge of the truth by seeking above all the Lord of the Church. This can mean continuing to advance along the way upon which it has entered. It can admittedly also mean a change of direction for the Confession. In any case the goal is clear and no one needs to be in any doubt about it. It is to know: "what is the breadth and length and depth and height and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge" (Eph. 3.18 f.). If we, as members of different confessions coming from different directions, make a really determined effort to approach this goal, we cannot fail to approach the theological point at which truth and unity coincide: Christ Himself. A presupposition for this is that we do not use the body of truth, that good thing committed to us, as a dead formula; we take it for what its discoverers found it to be, a sign pointing the way to the living Christ. The Churches of the Reformation, for example, cannot dispense with the doctrine of justification by faith alone in order to smooth the way to unity. We cannot do this because of our conviction that such a renunciation would lead us right past the truth, and this means right past unity in Christ. On the other hand, we may not use the doctrine of justification as a sort of dead formula to fence ourselves off from others, but must rather seek to develop it ever more thoroughly, to unfold it with growing care in all its fulness. All its fulness can indeed be none other than the whole Christ, the whole truth.

A frequent experience at ecumenical conversations is that it is not those who are ready to compromise and bargain for concessions from the other side, but those who in the suggested way stand uncompromisingly for *the* Truth, who all at once

begin to see one another's point, without being able to reduce this common understanding to a lucid formula. At Amsterdam this found expression in the fact that it was just after such an unsparing statement of all the differences between us, that we were again directed with great emphasis to the ultimate and profound unity in Christ that binds us together in spite of all. The way to unity then does not by-pass the differences between the Confessions, but leads so to speak right through them.

But that is not yet all. By their participation in the Ecumenical Movement individual Confessions have sought to proclaim that sense of responsibility that each one has for all the rest. This responsibility may not and cannot be limited merely to giving and receiving charitable donations. In the spiritual sphere we are even more urgently exhorted to be our brother's keeper, for in this matter it is his own and my own eternal salvation that is in question.

Up till now the main object of ecumenical conversations was to clarify one another's position and to reveal their depths, in the assurance that in the deep things contact would be made. But now this picture is changing. The area of these conversations is now becoming a battlefield where with the utmost consecration and earnestness each contends for the soul of his brother in the other Confession—or, to be more accurate, for all brethren in other Confessions. "The members of the ecumenical family cannot adopt the principle of non-intervention."[1] We have now to enter the field armed with the truth committed to us in order to overcome the other man. We must, however, face the fact that he, out of his sense of responsibility for us, will do all in his power to overcome us, and that he may indeed succeed in his efforts, so that in the end it will be impossible for us to leave the field in the state in which we entered it. This way of spiritual struggle is the only one that has really any promise. There can be no other way to unity in Christ, to unity in the Truth.

Through participation in such conversations the representative of each Confession assumes a whole series of heavy responsibilities.

[1] W. A. Visser 't Hooft in his article, "The Significance of the World Council of Churches" (Amsterdam, Volume I: *The Universal Church in God's Design*, London, S.C.M. Press, 1948, p. 192.)

To begin with, he is responsible for presenting to the representatives of the other Confessions the truth entrusted to himself and his "confessional kinsfolk" in such a way that the others really get to hear and understand what it means. Only then can he count on winning them over. The problem here is not merely that of translating our insights into a foreign language. What creates the greatest difficulties here is the task of transferring conceptions familiar to ourselves into a totally different context of ideas and system of thought. An example of what I mean is the concept of reason which, in Middle European theology, thanks especially to Luther, has been relegated to a definite position, which is certainly not "a place in the sun". In the Anglo-Saxon world, on the other hand, we constantly meet with a very positive valuation of the same concept. Which concept of reason is to be applied in ecumenical conversations? It is the same with a great many concepts which frequently have not one or two but a whole series of different meanings. It often happens at ecumenical conversations, especially at those of short duration, that the participants are driven to the verge of despair in face of such confusions of language. Ultimately this is bound up with the fact that our human language is really not at all capable of bearing witness to the mysteries of God. At this crucial point ecumenical conversations must therefore pass into common prayer. When it is a question of returning to Christ we do need to learn to renounce our own speech. Here nothing less is necessary than that Pentecost should happen again and again. On the other hand the meaning of Holy Scripture gives us no reason to suppose that this should not happen. There *is* the promise of the Holy Spirit to lead us into all the truth.

Now let us assume that this hypothetical representative of any one of the Confessions has not only succeeded in expounding clearly to the other partners in the discussion the meaning of his faith and its basis in Scripture, but that he, on his side, has suddenly been won over by another partner. He would then have to concede that the other was in the right and that he himself must receive the truth from him. He would be receiving a call to turn to Christ as Jesus called the Jews to Him according to John 8. Woe to him, should he stop his ears against the call. When this situation arises the participant in

ecumenical conversations assumes automatically a great new responsibility. He must in all seriousness consider how to bring home to the remaining members of his Confession the truth thus perceived. He must try to convince them. That is to say he must begin to reform his Confession. This is the very way in which he has to prove his loyalty to his Confession. Anyone who is not seriously prepared to follow such a course of action should keep away from ecumenical conversations.

This last point should have made it quite clear that the Churches of the Reformation ought to be well fitted for ecumenical conversations. For the motive that drives us evangelical Christians into ecumenical study can in the last resort be none other than the desire to penetrate ever more deeply into the truth revealed in Holy Scripture. Just because it is our claim that our faith is based on Scripture alone (*sola scriptura*) we must give candid consideration to all genuine expositions of Scripture, whoever gives them, coloured or white man, Calvinists, Orthodox or Anglicans. At the same time, there is implicit in this *sola scriptura* a readiness to reform ever and again one's own Confession, in other words to accept reformation according to Scripture, which was the fundamental principle of the Reformers. If only the Churches of the Reformation would learn to exercise this candour and to accept the gifts that God offers us in ecumenical discussion!

How then can this work be advanced? It would be wrong to look for quick results here. For strictly speaking the issue involved here is nothing less than the reformation of all Churches—more accurately of all Confessions in the world. This cannot happen overnight and we cannot in this matter let ourselves feel satisfied with encouraging achievements in individual questions, as was believed for a time. One of the essential points brought out at Amsterdam is just this, that a complete reformation in every one of the Churches will be necessary if we really mean to grow together into visible unity in externals also.

It is well known that the Ecumenical Council has created special commissions in order to further such inter-confessional conversations. It should now be clear that the function of these is not so much to effect a reconciliation between the various confessional opinions, as to open doors and overcome difficulties, so that participants in ecumenical discussion, struggling

for the truth in another Confession, may be able not merely to skirmish in the outer zone but to storm the opposing citadel itself. In order to achieve this we must never weary in our efforts to understand others. What has been said should make it quite plain that we must not stop at mere "understanding" —i.e. it is not enough if the participants in ecumenical discussion make occasional notes in the margin of their manuals of confessional knowledge.

3

Whilst these doctrinal discussions take place, the preaching of the Church goes on, according to the command of Christ. Are we to say that each confessional Church must take its own course in this field until unification is reached in the sphere of doctrine? One might just as well—or rather just as unreasonably—demand that each confessional Church should be silent until in its own realm doctrine has been brought to final clarity. It is, however, not only the preaching of each confessional Church that needs to be considered here. Rather we have now reached the point at which the question as to unity in the sense of John 17 rises in especially urgent form. We may not forget that the multiplicity of our confessions is always a serious hindrance to the recognition of Christ the Lord by the world.

From the moment when we recognise members of other Confessions as brothers in Christ we are forced to strive together to find what is the proper proclamation of Christ for the present time. Obviously this is another place where there is no room for the principle of non-intervention. The doctrinal discussion which we have been considering up till now must have as its sole aim to serve the proclamation of the Gospel. Our contention about the true proclamation will with equal necessity have to be a doctrinal discussion. But whilst in the former case we were concerned with the principles and norms of preaching, in this latter case the question at issue is how the message we proclaim is to be delivered to-day, in the twentieth century. Whilst in the first case we compared and analysed together the basic principles of preaching, in this latter case the question is how we can present the message, once it is recognised, to modern man in the particular situation in which he is placed. In the one case we are dealing with the general

presentation of Christian doctrine and the Gospel message (without reference to any matter that in given circumstances might turn out to be a burning question). Here on the other hand we enter into conversations with the actual situation in view. At the same time, in order to clarify our minds about what is a valid issue for faith in the present, we must refer to and be guided by decisions that already are or ought to be generally recognised as binding. In addition it must be borne in mind that we must not be content with discussion only, but must all try as occasion arises to make common proclamation of the truth of Jesus Christ in obedience to His commandment. Here we will go through the same experience as a chemist who is not satisfied merely to work out formulae for a certain combination, but goes on to arrange experiments to confirm or correct his calculations. Our endeavours in the sphere of proclaiming the Gospel will therefore, unintentionally as it were, have an important bearing on our discussions on doctrinal questions also.

What is to be the course taken in our struggle to decide the right form of proclamation? If it is to be a contention for the truth in unity we will not be able to rest content here either with the fulfilment of certain minimum demands. This is a point at which the experiences of the German Church conflict have something important to teach us. It was the German Christians themselves who in Germany in 1933 called to us that we were missing the great moment in which the German people looked for a united witness by evangelical Christians. Were they by any chance right? Obviously the main thing was to be clear in one's own mind and conscience about what particular witness was required of the Church of Christ in this particular situation. So it happened that the true unity of evangelical Christians in Germany came into being, not in the imperial synods of the German Christians, but at Barmen, among those who had in the first place not sought unity but the right word born of the truth. Nor was that all. In prisons Roman Catholic priests and Protestant pastors suddenly brought into real and living contact with one another recognised, as one of them put it, that the Lord had "licked them into unity". Things were at stake here about which it was not merely possible but imperative to speak with one voice.

In the ecumenical fellowship it cannot be otherwise. The word of truth will not be given us when we make unity our first objective. It is when we seek the word of truth alone that unity will be bestowed on us. Further, where a real constraint to common utterance is not present, all attempts to produce united messages to the world will remain ineffective. Such a constraint exists above all when the Church is really *in statu confessionis*, i.e. where the confession of the Church to her Lord is at stake. An example of this would be when in the sphere of politics alien "authorities and powers" demand something that is incompatible with obedience to Christ. The *status confessionis* in this case takes a form that is outwardly easy to see. In other spheres it may make a somewhat less dramatic appearance, and yet—with respect to a particular section of the people or particular vocations—have no less radical consequences, so that Christians are summoned to make confession with one accord just as much as in the first mentioned case. Is it possible then for such a *status confessionis* to arise for the ecumenical world? Or is it perhaps already here? One could point to the fact that over all the world the Church is obviously approaching once more a "pre-Constantinian era", a time, that is, in which she no longer enjoys any special, public privileges but is thrown back entirely on the power of the Risen One to whom she witnesses. This is the missionary situation, which, as everyone knows, is presented to us in the old "Western" world, just as much as in the still older "Eastern" world, or again in Russia or America (the two youthful partners in the course of world events). It might very well be the case that the individual Confessions in the different parts of the world will have to become in increasing measure the Church militant or be shown up as dead.

But will the ecumenical fellowship as such even then be found in *statu confessionis*? Will there be anything to form the subject matter of a common confession? There is indeed a whole series of critical points about which, one may suppose, a common confession will be or is already required of Christians. We may think, for example, of state totalitarianism, or communism, or capitalism, or the race question. It looks, however, as if these questions had a different aspect in different countries and parts of the world. There are too obviously some

areas in which one problem, and others in which another problem is acute. This clearly reveals a fresh element of tension in the ecumenical discussion. There exists a danger that as a result of the differences in their situations Christians in different regions and parts of the world will be unable to unite.[1] The struggle for the truth in Christ is in this case no easier than when dealing with doctrinal differences.

In spite of this tension the improbable keeps on happening —Christians find themselves of one mind in these questions too, and can bear witness to their unity in Christ. In this matter also we have a responsibility for one another. This can only mean that we must test by the standards of Scripture the preaching of local Churches involved in conflict, and either appropriate or reject it. In this way the ecumenical fellowship in 1934 made a clear decision for the Confessional Church in Germany and the message proclaimed by it. Many of our friends abroad have perhaps not recognised the significance of this for their own preaching and doctrine; but at least in 1934 they realised that the challenge directed to Christians in Germany was a challenge to Christians all over the world. Something like this might happen again to other churches in the world, the impulse coming, so to speak, from local churches and being taken up by the ecumenical fellowship.

In principle, however, the opposite case is conceivable. A prophetic word might be uttered first in the ecumenical fellowship and then taken over by the Churches. Because Christians are, after all, not called to testify against this system or that, but *for* the Lord Jesus Christ, it is possible that those who have to resist Communism might in this case be able to make a

[1] At the ecumenical doctrinal conversations described above, differences arose out of the historical and dogmatic conditions underlying the Confessions (although we do not wish to shut our eyes to the fact that here many boundaries are already obliterated). In this case, however, the conditions are primarily conditioned by geography and politics. One can therefore well imagine that Confessions which in the first case are still far apart can nevertheless in the second case speak with one voice. Whilst in the first case the co-operation of the world organisations of the Confessions seems required to prepare wider unification, the obvious suggestion in the second case seems to be that Christians within each nation and state should close their ranks in order to take united action. National associations, just as much as a world organisation of the Confessions, may of course become a hindrance on the way to unity. If, however, they are inwardly moving towards one goal kept clearly in view it is quite possible that they may be advancing the cause of unity in the truth. In any case the two forms of common action are not mutually exclusive, and it is high time for us to recognise that no contradiction is involved here.

common confession with those who have to resist capitalism or nationalism. It is indeed a touchstone for the truth of our concrete witness—for the truth in Christ that is to say—that the same propositions must still have the same validity even in a totally different geographical or political situation, although the detailed application of them may vary from time to time.

It is almost superfluous to indicate specially again the significance of such acts of witness for the question of Christian unity. To illustrate my point, let me again refer to the experience of the Confessional Church in Germany. With regard to the unification of evangelical Christians, what significance has the Barmen Declaration acquired to-day? It has neither had the power nor the intention to obliterate the differences between individual Confessions. The Barmen Declaration is rather looked upon by Lutherans, Reformed and United Evangelicals as a common exposition of Scripture and the Confessions handed down from Reformation times, binding on the members of each Confession. In Germany, then, a Reformed or Lutheran Churchman can in the future no longer claim to be really Reformed or Lutheran, if he does not—strange to say —take up his stand "on the Barmen ground", which they have trodden together. God willing, they will now continue should occasion arise to make common confession of their faith, as happened for example at Stuttgart in 1945. Thus the Evangelical Church in Germany would increasingly become a Church united in the act of confession itself, although having within itself differences arising out of the historical Confessions.

For a long enough time—we might say during the whole Constantinian era—the various acts of confession have led to schisms in the Church. Why should not a new era of Church History begin in which such acts would unite instead of dividing us?[1] As a matter of fact, in face of a whole series of actual

[1] The new factor in this case would be that the Acts of Confession themselves draw the ties between us ever closer despite the continuing validity of the traditional Confessions. In contrast with the ultimately rather too romantic idea that a unification would be possible by going back to the Confessions of the first five centuries, an attempt is here made to interpret the dynamic of the Holy Spirit, who surely impels the Church forward and not backward. It is a difficult matter to give clear expression to this; the bitter controversies about the relation of the Barmen "Declaration" to the Confessions of the Reformation which have been fought in Germany in recent years show clearly that we have not yet seen the last of this new phenomenon in Church History. Is it right to say that they have significance as a "pattern" for the Ecumenical World?

problems confessional differences are carrying less and less weight. The question of a Christian's attitude to the state might be taken as example to show that, in spite of different basic positions due to different conceptions of the meaning of the Reformation, the conclusions arrived at for the practical tasks of the Church in this field reach a surprising degree of unanimity. It is therefore well within the bounds of possibility that common declarations on critical problems of the present time will unite in closer ties Christians all over the world, because the point of such declarations is to witness in the present to the one Truth and the one Name that is above very name.

One may assume that the task of the organs of study created by the Ecumenical Council is in this case plain. For one thing there is the work of collecting and communicating the facts; then the word that the Church has to speak about such matters and events, as any country or Confession finds it must be given wide currency. The study commissions and their secretariats will need to give constant thought to the problem of working out the main lines of presentation of the Gospel in the world of to-day and of seeking new ways in which it may be possible henceforth to walk together, although formerly we thought this impossible. Here there recurs, this time as a "practical" case, the discussion between countries and Confessions which we characterised in the previous paragraph as "doctrinal conversations". There is a unity of subject matter linking indissolubly this endeavour after common action and a unified message to proclaim in the present and those questions of doctrine. Discussions and co-operation are two forms of ecumenical interest which will continue mutually to influence one another. In both cases the main thing in the end is that we should direct our efforts solely to the discovery of what ought to be our obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. If that one thing is done, "all these things shall be added unto you". To these things belongs also, under God, the unity of His Church. Our business is to make room for the Holy Spirit who gives us no rest but impels us towards unity in the Truth.

In conclusion let us consider again what it means in this context that all this struggle for truth must go on in faith in the unity which is the gift of Christ. It means first that we can never settle down content with the existing differences and di-

visions. Uneasiness about these divisions must never be allowed to leave us. Secondly it means that in every respect we must feel ourselves responsible for the whole of Christendom throughout the world. Even the course taken by Churches which do not participate officially in the Ecumenical Movement cannot be a matter of indifference to us. No one can take away from the Ecumenical Movement responsibility for Roman Catholic Christendom. It is a partner in the ecumenical discussion and cannot withdraw from this partnership, even if it gives to the discussion a different interpretation from the one we have sought to develop here. And in the third place, since we must never forget that it is with the unity that is the gift of Christ that we are here concerned, we must never lose sight of the fact that the whole ecumenical work is carried on not for its own sake, but for the sake of those for whom Christ died and rose again—that is for the whole of humanity. The aim of ecumenical discussion is to enable us to declare with one accord to this humanity His Glory.

"FULNESS" AND "FILL" IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

by The Rev. C. F. D. MOULE

Many readers will have access to J. Armitage Robinson's valuable note on the meaning of *pleroma* in his *Ephesians* (Macmillan, 1903), containing not only some important illustrative quotations from secular writers and from the Old Testament, but also a famous critique of the findings of previous scholars, in particular of J. B. Lightfoot.[1] The present article is an attempt to consider once more, but only in outline, the meaning of the root *pler-* ("fill", "fulness", etc.), and to show, in rather more detail, its bearing on the theology of the New Testament.

We will start from the extremely interesting and important passages where *pleroma* ("fulness") is used with reference to Christ. What did St. Paul mean when he wrote " . . . it was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the fulness (*pleroma*) dwell" (Col. 1.19, *R.V.*), and, again, " . . . in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2.9)? There is a possible explanation which some commentators have drawn from the technical language of a much later sect of "Gnostics" (as they are called), known as the Valentinians. Gnosticism was an attempt to explain human experience in terms of an unassailably perfect, uncontaminated God, immaterial and remote, connected to this manifestly imperfect world of matter by a kind of bridge or a chain, of which the links were intermediary revelations of God—creatures progressively less spiritual and more material in proportion to their remoteness from God and nearness to the material earth—creatures sometimes conceived by the ancient world as the mysterious powers which rode the planets and controlled human destiny, angels of fate, whether good or evil. The space separating the two ends of this bridge or chain, and the full complement of the powers which peopled it, appear to have been

[1] See *St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*, J. B. Lightfoot (2nd edition, 1876), note on the meaning of πλήρωμα; St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, J. A. Robinson (1903), note on the same; *The Epistle to the Colossians and the Epistle to Philemon*, L. B. Radford (1931), additional note The *Pleroma*; Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, article *Pleroma* by W. Lock.

styled by the Valentinians "the *pleroma*"; and if, many years earlier, the teachers of error at Colossae were using the term with the same connotation, then St. Paul's words certainly gain point, for they will mean: "There is no need to make a cult of angels (as was evidently being done, Col. 2.18, cf. 1.16), nor to dread the stellar powers who are supposed to control men's destiny (cf., perhaps, Col. 1.20), for anyone who has Christ has the totality, the *pleroma*: in him the entire *pleroma* (the whole universe, as one might say) resides." With this interpretation some have gone on to explain the word "bodily" in the sentence quoted before from Col. 2.9 as though it meant "organised in one personality", as contrasted with the Gnostic idea that the *pleroma* consisted of a series of different personalities, a whole range of angelic powers.[1] All this is tempting because it lends special point to the passages. But the general meaning is the same, even if, for lack of evidence, one is content to interpret the word more simply and less technically, as "the whole, the entirety, of the divine attributes—all the qualities of God". In that case St. Paul will mean that, whereas it is true of Christians that "The Spirit of God dwelleth in (or among) them" (1 Cor. 3.16), of Christ it is uniquely true that the entirety of God's nature resides in Him—a thought which, incidentally, seems to fit in well with an evidently non-technical use of *pleroma* in a very different writer, namely the sentence in John 1.16, " . . . of his fulness have all we received", with which is perhaps to be compared John 3.34, " . . . he giveth not the Spirit by measure". The thought in both writers appears to be that a completeness, an entirety, distinguishes the measure of Christ's divinity and of His resources from the mere "inspiration" of a mere man, however great. And as for "bodily" in the Colossians phrase—attractive though it is to interpret it as "organised in one personality", it seems more probable that it means "in a bodily person—in the Jesus of history". This "commonsense" exegesis of the Colossians *pleroma*-passages may be less ingenious than the one which assumes a Gnostic technicality as its background; but in either case what is most remarkable is that such astonishing claims are made by Christian experience for this Jesus who had so recently been crucified.

[1] See C. H. Dodd on Colossians in *The Abingdon Bible Commentary* (ed. Eiselen, Lewis and Downey, Epworth Press).

But now, what of *pleroma* in the Epistle to the Ephesians? In Eph. 1.22,23 the R.V. reads: "he [God] . . . gave him [Christ] to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all". Nearly all commentators here take "fulness", *pleroma*, to refer to the Church; and if the verb translated "filleth" is not transitive but passive (in the Greek it may be either "middle" or "passive"), then one finds the arresting idea that the Church—all those who are "in Christ"—is *the completion of him* [that is Christ] *who* all in all [entirely, shall we say?] *is being filled*: in other words it is the daring doctrine that, in a sense, Christ is not complete until His body the Church is complete: He awaits His *pleroma*, His full growth, His consummation, which is to be the full-grown Church. That idea is nobly worked out in Armitage Robinson's commentary, and is fit theme for prolonged meditation. And even if the verb is to be taken as active, the idea of the Church as Christ's "totality" may still stand to shame and challenge us who are His members or limbs: we are intended to be the completeness of the One who pervades the whole of things. A small minority, however, of whom the present writer is one, is inclined to take *pleroma* here as intended to describe Christ, not His Church: "God gave Christ to be head over all things to the Church, which is his body, [and to be] the fulness of him [that is God] that filleth all in all." In that case, we have a thought identical with that of Colossians, and (incidentally) one of the alleged discrepancies between these two Epistles vanishes.[1]

Be that as it may, another passage in Ephesians does undoubtedly bring the word into close contact with Christians. In Eph. 4.12,13, in a passage which certainly fits well with Armitage Robinson's exegesis of the previous one, mention is made of "the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness (*pleroma*) of Christ". Here it seems most natural to take the closing phrase as parallel to and virtually identical in meaning with the preceding phrase, "a fullgrown man"; so that "the measure of the stature of the fulness of

[1] See A. E. N. Hitchcock in *The Expository Times*, xxii (1910-11), 91; C. F. D. Moule, ibid., lx (1948-49), 53, 224; C. L. Mitton, ibid. ,320.

Christ" may mean "the full height [in the metaphorical sense, of course, of *spiritual* maturity] represented by Christ's completeness". If so, this is the bold idealism of a profound thinker who sees Christians as destined to rise, in Christ, to Christ's own completeness; or, if that is an impossible contradiction of the firmly-held conception of Christ's uniqueness, perhaps it means "the full height demanded of men by Christ"—for a genitive like "of Christ" must often be interpreted largely by the context and the probabilities. In either case, we are, once more, brought face to face with a stupendous claim; and we begin to see how much this simple word is made to carry.

There is one other passage in this same Epistle in which the word is used; and there, as often, it seems to mean "the completeness" destined by God's plan: in Eph. 1.10 "unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times" means (I believe) simply "to be dispensed as soon as the time was fully ripe": God's "mystery" was kept concealed until it was the right moment for Him to dispense it (cf. Gal. 4.4).

If the quite simple, commonsense interpretations of this word are sufficient, in these passages, to elucidate their high import, they are certainly in keeping with the straightforward use of it elsewhere. In the Greek version of the Bible best known to us, the Septuagint, *pleroma* occurs often in the phrase "the earth and all that therein is", "the earth and its fulness". In other words *pleroma* often means "that which fills up", "the contents". This has been demonstrated to be its meaning in some passages in secular writers (as when Lucian speaks of fighting a naval battle with so many *pleromata*, that is "full crews", "ships fully manned").[1] *Pleroma* is the "total", the "strength" of a regiment, the "establishment" of an administrative staff. Thus, in 1 Cor. 10.26, it stands in a familiar Old Testament quotation: "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof"; and in Matt. 9.16 and Mark 2.21 it simply means the "patch" with which a hole in a garment is filled up; or in Mark 8.20 it is the food which filled the baskets after the miracle—"basketfuls", as the *R.V.* correctly renders the phrase. Similarly, in Rom. 11.25 "the fulness of the Gentiles" means "the full number": whether "all the Gentiles there are", or "all the Gentiles that are destined to be brought in" is a matter to be

[1] For this and other examples, see Lightfoot, op. cit.

decided on theological, not linguistic grounds. And in Rom. 13.10 "the *pleroma* of the law" may mean "the full content of the law": love is itself the whole scope of the ethical code in epitome. But it seems to me not impossible that the R.V. is right here in translating "fulfilment"; for, though a word with the termination *-ma* ought, by analogy, to be less *verbal* in its meaning than "fulfilment", it is very dangerous to be rigid in one's merely linguistic "rules", if the context or parallel usage points in another direction; and it is perhaps significant that, conversely, the form *plerosis*, which should mean "fulfilment" or "the act of filling", is used in the LXX version of Ezek. 32.15 to mean "the fulness", exactly like *pleroma*; and in another Greek version (Theodotion's) of Dan. 10.3, *plerosis* is used (again just like *pleroma*) to mean "the fulness of time". Moreover, in Gal. 6.2, an act of love (bearing one another's burdens), corresponding to what is mentioned in Rom. 13.10, is said to be a way of "fulfilling" the law of Christ (the verb being used).

This has brought us to the cognate verb, *pleroun* and its compounds. As a rule it falls in the N.T. into one of three broadly distinguishable but related meanings—either (1) "fill", in the general sense of putting something into a vessel but not necessarily until it is literally *full*; or (2) "fill up", in the sense of completing or making completely full a vessel which is not full, or (3) "accomplish", "fulfil". The most familiar examples of this last sense, (3), are provided, of course, by the references to the fulfilment of prophecy: "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet" is a common refrain, especially in St. Matthew. The conception of prophecy implied by such a phrase is, of course, an important matter which requires the most careful study. Is the Evangelist suggesting that the divine overruling caused events to happen in the life of Christ with the express purpose of fulfilling details in Old Testament prophecy? Before any definite conclusion could be reached, one thing to be done would be to investigate the use of the Greek particle represented by "that". It is well known that, in New Testament Greek, it does not invariably express *purpose*, but sometimes *result* or *consequence*, in which case the sense might be "and so was fulfilled . . . ". But this is a point not to be determined by linguistic evidence alone, and an even more important step would be to examine the conception of inspiration in

various writers of the period. Within the scope of this article, it will be enough to have stated the problem. A particularly interesting example, however, of this usage may here be mentioned, namely the emphatic passage in Matt. 5.17, "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil", where the verb fulfil is used in reference both to the law and to the prophets. To fulfil prophecy is to accomplish what was prophesied. But to fulfil the law is strictly (as we have already seen) to accomplish what the law requires and to promote its intentions: it is the opposite of breaking or "destroying", which latter verb is, indeed, less appropriate to the prophets than to the law. The two senses are distinguishable, and might (as some have pointed out)[1] represent two different Semitic words. On the other hand, it is arguable that this passage is to be interpreted as though the law, no less than the prophets, were regarded as a foreshadowing of God's purposes, which Christ fulfils; while, conversely, the prophets are not mere predicters but also, like the law, proclaimers of the will and character of God. In any case, a further matter requires to be observed in this connexion, namely the bearing of these fulfilment sayings on eschatology. If the ministry of Jesus is portrayed as already the fulfilment of prophecy and the implementing of the law of God, we are led also to look forward to a future when that process will be consummated. In other words, the "realised eschatology" seen in the Gospel narrative blends with a "futurist eschatology" looking to a time when (as we have seen) the work of Christ is fulfilled and consummated in his people.

So much for some of the implications of sense (3), in our analysis—that of accomplishment or fulfilment. Returning to the first sense, that of "putting something into a vessel", a very frequent use here is the metaphorical one which speaks of filling a person with the Spirit, or filling the heart with joy, or it may be with sorrow or malice or some evil design. Within sense (2) —that of filling entirely full or completing—we will be content to single out two interesting uses. First, there is the conception of *supplying a need*: in 1 Cor. 16.17 the arrival of two Christian friends from Corinth "makes up", as we might say, for the

[1] See (e.g.) Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*, in loc.

absence of the others; in Phil. 2.30, a friend, Epaphroditus, had taken grave risks in "supplying" to Paul on behalf of the other Philippians a service such as they lacked the power to render in person; and in Col. 1.24 the Apostle dares to say that the sufferings which befall him in his work of evangelism enable him to "fill up . . . that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ". This either refers to the total destined afflictions of the Christian Church ("Christ" being identified with His Body the Church), to the completion of which Paul's sufferings thus contribute; or to the completing of the *effect* of Christ's sufferings, in the sense that the suffering of Christians in His name contributes to the effectiveness—the availability, as it were—of His constructive sufferings. In all these instances compound forms of the verb are used—*antanapleroun* in the last, *anapleroun* in the others; and the same is true of a much more commonplace instance which has almost lost sight of the basic meaning of *supplying a need*, namely that in 1 Cor. 14.16 where it simply refers to a person who "occupies" a certain place or position. The second of the uses within the general sense (2)—"fill up" or "complete"—which calls for special mention is the conception of completing one's spiritual growth, reaching maturity of character. Particularly interesting in view of the Christological use of *pleroma* from which we began is Col. 2.9, 10: " . . . in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in him ye are made full, who is the head of all principality and power." If the error which Paul is attacking is the idea that Christ is only *one* of the many denizens of the gulf between God and man, then this means, perhaps, that—on the contrary—Christ contains the whole *pleroma*, so that to be "in Christ" is to be complete: you cannot add to your freedom or your standing by adding "principalities" or "powers" to your pantheon. If, on the other hand, we were right in taking *pleroma* to mean here simply the totality of the divine attributes, then perhaps the sentence means that, since this fulness dwells in Christ, then to be "in Christ" is to attain to the fullest possible maturity of character. It will be comparable to the phrase in Eph. 4.13, which we have already tried to interpret similarly. At all events we must compare Col. 4.12, "that ye may stand perfect and fully assured". Here, and in many other passages, the word "perfect" is certainly to be compared with the words "full"

and "fill" in reference to maturity of character;[1] and, as a matter of fact, some MSS have, in this very passage, the word "filled" or "made full" instead of "fully assured". Comparable, too, is the striking phrase in Rev. 3.2, "I have found no works of thine fulfilled before my God", where "filled" (or "fulfilled") evidently means "brought to maturity", "fully carried through", and the idiom is strongly reminiscent of the use of the corresponding Hebrew word in such a passage as Num. 32.11, where what is translated "wholly followed" is literally "filled after". *Pleroun*, in short, is a word associated with "thoroughness", "accomplishment", "carrying through" the divine purpose, wholeheartedly obeying the will of God. It can also, by an evil twist of the same idea, be applied to the "filling up" of wickedness—acting, that is, with a wickedness which completes the tale of sins destined to bring down ruin on one's head, as in 1 Thess. 2.16 "to fill up their sins alway"; Matt. 23.32, "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers".

This is nothing like a complete review of the concept of "fulness" and "filling" in the New Testament; but mention has been made of most of the more important theological issues; and an attempt must be made to sum up the conclusions. First, it appears that the most commonsense, non-technical interpretations may be nearest to the truth: we shall not go far astray if we keep close to the simple, basic idea of "filling". Secondly, the "high-lights" of the study of this word for the student of New Testament doctrine are christology, ecclesiology, and prophecy: in other words, the bearing of this root upon the N.T. understanding of the character and Person of Christ, of the character and destiny of the community of believers, and of the conception of God's design and its completion both in the ministry of Jesus and in the still future developments of His purposes. And, lastly, is it fanciful to suggest that these three are linked together, not only by etymology but more organically? The entirety of the Godhead resides in Christ; accordingly, He represents the fulfilment of God's age-long design (cf. Eph. 1.10 " . . . to sum up all things in Christ"); and in Him the Christian Church finds its completion, and He in it. The word-group under study spans both "realised" and "futurist" eschatology, and in both Christ is Himself the central point.

[1] The Hebrew root meaning "perfect" is sometimes rendered in the LXX by *pleroun*.

BOOK REVIEWS

David Cairns: An Autobiography: Some Recollections of a long life, and Selected Letters, Edited by his Son and Daughter, with a Memoir by Professor D. M. Baillie. S.C.M. Press. 12s. 6d.

It is fortunate that Alison and David Cairns encouraged their father to record the memories of his earlier days and his reflections upon them, for in *David Cairns: An Autobiography* there is not only what friends will recognise and welcome as a faithful self-portrait, and what a wider circle will appreciate as a book revealing unusual power of describing people and places in precisely the right words, but such an account of patient and determined wrestling with spiritual problems as constitutes, quite without setting out to do so, a valuable contribution to Apologetics.

The story is told intimately and unaffectedly, but with enviable command of language. The narrative brings to notice family affection, "a very large range of friendship", an interesting list of men and books that helped at one stage or another, personal experience which generated sympathy with the troubled mind of the period, an "ardently persuasive" manner, a peculiarly determined upholder of principles, and serene conviction as to the hereafter. For those in difficulties Principal Cairns offered no glib dogmatic solution but rather the companionship of a strong and understanding elder brother, and he seems to have aided many. Even those to whom, as to myself, his line of apologetic argument made no particular appeal, felt that he was thoroughly alive to the problems and was making an entirely genuine and far from unoriginal assault upon them.

A. D. Nock has said of Augustine that "Christianity had at most times his vote to be true if it could". There is some analogy to this in the spiritual pilgrimage which the Autobiography traces. "I must always have had a will to believe", says Cairns; and one passage seems to identify his doubts and hesitations with a "persistent lower self" which he felt he must master. There was a deep and ancient loyalty, leaving room indeed for adaptation and reconstruction, but implying quite a different situation from that of some to-day who are without such ultimate confidence in the past. At the same time Cairns was as hostile to resignation as R. L. Stevenson. Further, although introspective, he always preferred "disinterested helpfulness" to "spiritual solicitude about one's own state" and so became a hopeful missionary both in personal intercourse and through his writings.

An interesting feature of the book is the insight afforded into the mind of the Scottish Seceders, a group of which so many of the writer's forbears and relatives were honourable representatives. Of some of the more distinguished of these, especially the Browns, one might wish to have heard more from the pen of their distinguished kinsman, but the type is very well portrayed.

One of the most remarkable things in Scottish Church History is the transition from Ebenezer Erskine to men like John Cairns and J. H. Leckie. If one reads the *Act, Declaration and Testimony* of 1736 it is difficult to discover any family connexion with the *Declaratory Act* of 1879. Is it not of the irony of history that a strictly constitutionalist movement by separating itself became independent in outlook and so grew to be liberal, with the result that D. S. Cairns could continue proudly in its fellowship all his days and yet study under Herrmann and soak himself in Browning and read Maurice and admire Macleod Campbell and declare that he "hated Charles Hodge"?

Everyone must feel grateful to Professor D. M. Baillie for the concise Memoir which prefaces the Autobiography, and especially for the evaluation of the teaching of Principal Cairns, which few would be in a position to attempt with such authority and competence. The Selected Letters included in the volume are characteristic. The Principal was an assiduous letter-writer, and thought in his letters. Some of them reached a high standard of illegibility, but they were always well worth deciphering.

There are a few obvious misprints in this publication, and one observes occasional slips such as the Auld Kirk spelling of the writer's native parish on p. 65, the Robert Davidson of p. 76, the omission of the Logic Class on p. 83, a slightly inaccurate scripture memory on p. 121, and the title of Leckie's work incorrectly given on p. 126. The Index is not very helpful: for example, only one reference is given to Maurice though his name occurs in interesting passages in several parts of the book, and the same applies to other names. The illustrations are of interest, and the volume is attractively produced. Altogether this is a most delightful, and at the same time a most helpful, book.

G. D. Henderson

The Work and Words of Jesus. By A. M. Hunter. 196 pp. S.C.M. Press. 12s. 6d.

Professor A. M. Hunter's *Work and Words of Jesus* is a short Life of Christ, intended in the first instance for divinity students, based on Gospel Source Criticism, and "embodying the results of recent

scholarship". The book is, in fact, a popular study of Synoptic Christology, introduced by a brief historical sketch of *Leben-Jesu-Forschung* (with a passing glance at Form Criticism), and set in a context of chronology and contemporary history. An appendix of some 66 pages gives the Gospel sources (Q, M, L) in the Revised Version.

The divinity student will learn much from this book. It gives a compendious account of the main topics, and it never loses sight of the certitudes of the Christian Faith. Dr Hunter has the gift of focusing attention on essentials, and presents difficult and complicated issues in plain intelligible terms. At times he lights up whole areas of theological controversy by a luminous phrase or an apt quotation.

The "historical" Portrait which emerges from Dr Hunter's reconstruction, on the basis mainly of our primary sources, Mark and Q, is the traditional (and apostolic) Christ. Many will feel that, in making Source Criticism his main approach and ignoring altogether the results of Form Criticism, Dr Hunter has failed to take any account of the fact that even the earliest formulations of the story and teaching of Jesus were already coloured by the faith of the Christian community. Whether or to what extent his Portrait derives from the history or the post-Resurrection presentation of it still remains the crucial issue.

It is, in fact, doubtful if it is possible to write such a book at all nowadays without first meeting the objection that the materials for a historical Life simply do not exist. Fifty years ago Source Criticism seemed to be sapping the very foundations of the older Lives of Christ. Now it is Form Criticism which is engaged in demolishing the primary sources. All we can study now (form critics tell us) is not the Jesus of history or the history of Jesus, but *Heilsgeschichte* and the Christ of the faith and worship of the primitive Church. And if, in its extreme form, the first has been dismissed as legend, the latter is now being reduced to myth. Whatever substance there may be in such views, the enormous influence of such books as Bultmann's *Jesus* (English trans. *Jesus and the Word*), not to mention his more recent *Offenbarung und Heilsgeschehen* (1941) and *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (1949), cannot be ignored and requires an answer, whether it always deserves one.

Following Dodd, Dr Hunter argues for "realised eschatology"; the Parousia is explained (or explained away) as an event beyond time and space which we cannot strictly speaking *think*. It is a pity Dr Hunter has been unable to include an account of the results of Oscar Cullmann's important book, *Christus und die Zeit* (Basel, 1946), for it is a salutary corrective to any theory of the Parousia which

fails to see in it an imminent event for the primitive Church "in the full temporal sense" (p. 74). At the same time Dr Cullmann (as does Dr Hunter) puts the emphasis in the New Testament where it belongs: the Resurrection (and the realised Kingdom of God) remains *das Primäre*. Canonical Scripture itself, not only in St. John, corrects the Parousia error (2 Peter 3.8), while the essential Parousia doctrine that history will be crowned in a final consummation is conserved. (Dr Hunter's account of the Last Supper would also have benefited from a reading of Joachim Jeremias's *Die Abendmahlsworte Jesu* (Göttingen, 1935; 2nd edit., 1949). I suspect that his chronological outline owes something to Dr George Ogg's careful and valuable study, *The Chronology of the Public Ministry of Jesus*; an acknowledgment would have been worth a brief footnote.)

Continental works have not always been easy to obtain, but British post-war scholarship is similarly ignored or overlooked. G. S. Duncan's *Jesus, Son of Man* is not once mentioned. C. K. Barrett's outstanding study *The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition* (S.P.C.K., 1947) will provide the divinity student with more up-to-date material on the Birth stories than Denney's *Studies in Theology* (a great book, but not a very recent one); and the reader will find a fresh point of view on source critical and other topics in G. D. Kilpatrick's *Origins of the Gospel according to St. Matthew* (Oxford, 1946). On the Aramaic side, Hunter takes Dalman as his main authority; he misunderstands Dalman's *bereh d'anasha*, a literal equivalent of *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*, but an impossible Aramaic for a titular "Son of Man" (*barnash* by itself can be both titular and generic; cf. Duncan, op cit., p. 136). This is a small cavil, but there are more important points. Dodd's conjecture at Mark 1.15 (adopted by Hunter, p. 73) is difficult to defend on purely linguistic grounds.

The appendix which forms about one third of the book does not add to its weight. It is a reproduction of T. W. Manson's reconstruction, and the scholarly prose of the Revised Version is scarcely the ideal medium for so vivid and living a document as Q. An index of Biblical passages would have been a help.

MATTHEW BLACK

Evangelisches Gutachten zur Dogmatisierung der leiblichen Himmelfahrt Mariens. Chr. Kaiser Verlag, München, 1950.

UNDER the harsh treatment of the Christian Church by the National-Socialist régime in Germany the divided Churches found themselves drawing together, the Evangelical Church (including Lutheran and

Reformed) on the one hand and the Roman Catholic Church on the other. Each was more ready to listen to the witness of the other, to set aside polemical interests, and to rejoice in the working of divine grace beyond the frontiers of the respective Churches. People recognised each other as brothers in spite of the frontiers, and profound theological discussion was carried on by groups of theologians from both Churches based on the growing sense of responsibility which each held for the other in Jesus Christ.

In discharge of this brotherly responsibility, a group of theologians in Heidelberg, under the brilliant leadership of Professor Edmund Schlink, felt urged to contribute to the Roman Catholic discussion which preceded the proclamation of the new dogma of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. Now that the *Munificentissimus Deus* has been proclaimed, and the dogma of the physical assumption of the Virgin Mary has become for Roman Catholics necessary for saving faith, Professor Schlink and his colleagues have issued the contents of their deliberations in the form of a memorandum which serves a two-fold purpose. Here Evangelical Theology delivers its soul and in the most brotherly spirit warns the Roman Church of the dire consequences of its action, not only for the Ecumenical Church but even for the Church of Rome itself. The document is a model of theological discussion and a notable contribution to the relations between the Roman Catholic and Evangelical Churches.

The memorandum falls into three short chapters. In the First Chapter there is given a critical examination of the new dogma, both of its grounds and their relation to the Apostolic foundation of the Church, and of its contents and their consequences for Mariology, Christology, for Faith and the doctrine of the Church. The Second Chapter discusses the bearing of all this upon the relations between the Evangelical and Roman Churches; and the Third Chapter is devoted to the unfortunate results of the Dogma for the common Christian Front behind which both Churches stand over against an unchristian world. The purpose of this review is not to go over again the ground which Professor Schlink has covered so adequately but to single out and discuss what appear to be the questions of outstanding significance for the whole Church.

1. Perhaps the most stunning fact about the proclamation of the new dogma is the way in which the Roman Church has sought to justify it: *on another foundation than that of the Prophets and Apostles upon which the whole Church is built.* That is where the memorandum from Heidelberg first comes to grips with the Papal pronouncement. After recalling the Apostolic foundation of the Church and its intrinsic finality which excludes addition to it, Professor Schlink goes on to ask how the new dogma stands to this fact (which for Evan-

gelical Theology is the supreme test). Far from there being any Scriptural authority for the idea, it is actually contrary to the unique eschatological character of Christ's Resurrection and Ascension, and the unique relation this bears to the resurrection of all who will rise again at the *Parousia*; in fact it turns the assumption of Mary into one of the saving acts of God alongside the salvation-events of Christ Himself. Far from there being any justification for the notion in the tradition of the Church, even after the sixth century the liturgy of the feast of the Assumption of Mary regularly speaks of her *dormitio*, *pausatio*, and *transitus animae*, with never a word about a physical assumption. Even as late as 1568 the Roman Church made it clear that it did not know what had happened to the body of Mary after her death. In no sense therefore can the new dogma be said to fulfil the requirements of the Vinzentian canon: *quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est. Hoc est etenim vere proprieque catholicum.* . . . The horrifying thing about this dogma therefore is not only that it has no Biblical or Apostolic foundation, but that here quite plainly the Roman Church claims to be able to produce at will "Apostolic Tradition" out of itself. In other words, here where the Pope exercises for the first time the authority given him by the Vatican Council of 1870, he both lays claim to be able to produce dogmatic truth, and to do that apart from Apostolic legitimation. In explanation of this procedure we may cite the words of a Roman Catholic theologian in a recent number of the periodical *Christ und Welt*. "The new dogma is justified not by appealing to evidence which is regarded as strictly scientific (i.e. to Scripture and Tradition which have their source in Primitive Christianity) but by appealing instead to the so-called intuitive understanding of the present-day Church for matters of faith.[1] One begins with the acknowledged fact that the present-day Church believes in the Ascension of Mary, and then explains that because of the assistance of the Holy Spirit it would be impossible for the Church to be mistaken in such a belief. From the insight thus gained into the interpretation and estimation of traditional teaching the Church works backwards to Primitive Christianity. The priority thus recorded to the intuitive understanding of the present-day Church over the results of pure historical investigation of Scripture and Tradition is the theoretical presupposition of the new dogma and at the same time the practical consequence of its 'definition' through the Pope. Therein and not so much in its content lies its extraordinary *theological significance*."

Such an argument will no doubt be accepted readily by Roman

[1] The German text has *auf den sogenannten Glaubenssinn der gegenwärtigen Kirche*. The phrase "Catholic instinct" is used by an English Roman Catholic writer—cf. *Blackfriars*, October, 1950.

Catholics who hold to the doctrine of *fides implicita*, for this really defines Tradition in terms of the conscious mind of the Roman Church and enables it by some "Catholic instinct" to realise explicitly truths which are alleged to belong to the original deposit even though there is not a single scrap of historical tradition to justify it. All that the Roman Church needs to do is to declare its mind which cannot err because it is reckoned to have incorporated the Spirit of Truth. This new declaration, however, can only convince the world at large that the Roman procedure leads to *Mythologisierung*, while to the Evangelical Church it makes perfectly plain the place of the teaching office of the Roman Church as represented in the person of the Pope. It occupies a place of self-sufficiency and independence and even superiority over against the Apostolic Foundation, and in fact makes that of secondary importance. As Professor Schlink and his colleagues point out, it means that the Roman Church both loosens its moorings from the Apostolic Foundation and makes itself superior to the Apostles.

This inevitably has the most far-reaching consequences for ecumenical discussions with Roman Catholics. The Evangelical Church takes its stand upon the Words of the Lord in St. John's Gospel which declare that the Spirit of Truth will not speak anything of Himself but recalls the Church to all things which Christ has *said*, and so leads it into all Truth. Bound thus to the Holy Spirit speaking through the Scriptures, the Evangelical Church can only be profoundly shocked both at the extent of Roman deviation from the Apostolic Teaching and at the fundamental renunciation of the Apostolic Foundation which this involves. Add to this the fact that the Vatican Council, which gave the Pope the authority he has used, declares also that such *ex cathedra* definitions of dogma are "in and from themselves irreformable", and it becomes perfectly apparent that the Roman Church can never go back to the Apostolic Foundation for correction and reform.

2. The second important fact we must note about the new dogma is that it brings Roman Catholic mariology to its crowning point. The Evangelical Church recognises the unique place of Mary in the Gospel as the mother of Jesus Christ the Son of God, and will not separate its thought of her from the divine act of the Incarnation. But it recognises also that Mary was a sinner who herself in the *Magnificat* acknowledged a Saviour, and it remembers that on the Cross Jesus gave Mary His earthly mother to be the mother of John, clearly declaring that with His death His relation to her was not to be continued as it was before. She stood there one with the other sinners whose sins He was bearing as the Lamb of God, and as such came under the judgment of the Cross as well as its

redemption. Roman theology has, however, for long been in the process of extracting Mary from the communion of the Church of redeemed sinners, and separating her from the fellowship of the faithful. With this dogma the Roman Church declares unmistakably that she does not belong to the Church which waits with all the faithful for the coming of their Lord and the redemption of the body.

More significant still, however, is the fact that the Roman Church has, through some *communicatio idiomatum*, been transferring to Mary the uniqueness of Jesus Christ. The Scriptures teach us that there is salvation in none other than Jesus Christ, for there is none other name given among men whereby we must be saved. He only is Mediator, is Son of God, is King. But precisely parallel with these divine attributes we find the Roman Church speaking of Mary as *Maria Mediatrix et Corredemptrix* and even as *Filia Dei* and *Dea*. Now that Mary is declared to have ascended into heaven like Christ, we have promulgated the last stage in this parallelism between Christ and the Virgin Mary.

Let us be quite fair. The Roman Catholic Church does not teach any absolute likeness or identity of being and work between Christ and Mary, for Mary is a creature who has received divine favour (cf. the papal bull *Ineffabilis Deus* of 1854). If Christ is Lord and King in His own right, Mary is regarded as Queen on the ground of Christ's work, and as His helper, but as such she so enters into the very redemptive work of Christ and so belongs to the great salvation-events that mariology definitely becomes a part of Roman Christology. The physical assumption of the Virgin Mary means that she is taken up into the divine sphere, and that it is there that she belongs rather than to the Church that waits to see its Lord and become like Him. What confusion this brings into the Apostolic faith! Such a dogma cannot stop there. Its breach with the Biblical eschatology carries terrible consequences with it which we cannot elaborate here, though it may be sufficient to say that the next dogmatic step of importance which the Roman Church, to be consistent, must take, will be to deny the Second Advent of Christ and teach in deadly earnest a fully realised eschatology.

3. The third important fact is in some ways the most ominous of all—the enormous significance which the new dogma has for the Roman doctrine of the priesthood of the Church (cf. the encyclical *Ad catholici sacerdotii* of 1935). Roman Catholic dogmatics teaches that the great mystery of the maternity of the Church belongs to the priesthood which miraculously continues, as it were, the birth from Mary, and is indeed an extension of the mysterious maternity which she had with regard to the God-Man (cf. M. J. Scheeben,

The Mysteries of Christianity, p. 546 f.). Thus at the Mass the priesthood gives birth to the Eucharistic Christ, and joins Him to the Church in one body. Add to this the fact that the priesthood also extends the work of Christ, repeating and perpetuating in time His propitiatory sacrifice in the sacrifice of the Mass, and it becomes apparent that the priesthood exercises such controlling power in and over the Church that it becomes a unique and divine order. The significance of the new dogma is plain: as the Virgin Mary is the symbol (and more than the symbol) for the celibate priesthood, her physical assumption into the divine sphere carries with it what amounts to the deification of the priesthood itself. This crowns the age-long Roman teaching that through the divine grace the priest is *divus*.

How different is the view of Evangelical Theology which, to make use of the same analogy, may well think of the ministry at the Eucharist as occupying rather the place of Joseph! As he had no control over the miraculous virgin birth of Jesus Christ, but was commanded to take Mary unto himself as his wife, protect and guard and nourish her, according to the revelation of God, so the ministry nourishes, and leads and guards the Church of Jesus Christ. But that which makes it Church, that which makes Christ present in its midst, is the Holy Spirit, and over the Holy Spirit the ministry has no authority. Again at the holy Eucharist the minister obeys the will of God and celebrates according to the institution of Christ; but in the miraculous presence of the Word made flesh, he can exercise no control, for it is the Lord's Supper (*Kyriakon deipnon*) and not his own (*idion deipnon*); he can only stand by to wonder and adore. This is one of the crucial points in the teaching of the Evangelical Church: it is the subjection of the Eucharist to the control of the priesthood here which lies behind all denial of inter-communion. The new Roman dogma makes it plain where such a false road inevitably leads.

The Roman Catholic Church to-day stands in a most perplexing position. It is amazing to read book after book by modern Roman Catholic theologians and scholars which are so Biblical that one would hardly know they were Roman except for the evidence of the *imprimatur*. Modern Biblical scholarship such as the immense work of Kittels *Theologische Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament* has provided inspiration for many of them, and helped them to return to the Scriptures and to the Apostolic Foundation of our Christian Faith. One notes for example the rediscovery of eschatology in Roman theology and the signs of a new era which that is awakening for a great many. On the other hand, the papal definition and promulgation of this new dogma, means that the powers of reaction

are mighty within the Roman Church, and that under their impulse the ecclesiastical machine can only go on grinding out its dogmas to their absurd conclusions. The proclamation of the new dogma of the physical assumption of the Virgin Mary is, however, of unique significance. Here at last the Roman Church has taken a definite step which calls in question its Apostolicity. The Church which has the promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it is the Apostolic Church. To be the One, Holy, Catholic Church means that throughout all the changes of history until the Second Advent of Jesus Christ the Church is and remains identical with itself (*ecclesia semper eadem*) in that it maintains the teaching of the Apostles in the obedience of faith, and does not alter its nature by changing its foundation, by subtracting from it or adding to it other than that which has already been laid. Therein lies the Apostolicity of the Church of Jesus Christ. But now that the Roman Church has taken a step which inevitably calls in question its Apostolicity, Protestants are aghast. Throughout the Roman Church, particularly in Germany and France, there are great numbers of theologians and churchmen who are deeply hurt and abashed at the turn of events at Rome, and know not what to think, especially when the *Munificentissimus Deus* ends by laying it down that those who deny or dare to doubt this papal definition have altogether fallen from the divine and Catholic faith. In our brotherly responsibility, which as the Evangelical Church we bear toward them we pray for them, and pray the more earnestly knowing how great is the agony of Reformation. *Sic Deus dum vivificat, facit illud occidendo; dum in coelum vehit, facit illud ad infernum ducendo.*

T. F. Torrance

The Assumption of Our Lady and Catholic Theology. By Victor Bennett and Raymond Winch. S.P.C.K. vii + 120 pp. 5s.

This very learned little book appears appositely. It owes a great deal of its interest to non-Roman Catholic Christians (apart from its own merit) to the fact that its authors are themselves Roman Catholics, critical of the new dogma, which had not, however, been declared when they wrote the book. They are remarkably outspoken in their criticism; for example: "Viewed in all its bearings, a dogmatic definition of the Assumption by the Pope must seem a most unhappy development of the present religious situation. As well as being defective in all the relevant fields of evidence, the Assumption, if raised to a dogma, would have, as indicated, unhappy repercussions on the prestige of the Papacy, on the general trend of Roman Catholic devotion and on what is a burning ques-

tion for the twentieth century, the reunion of Christendom" (pp. 13-14).

The book is very definitely to be commended to those who would be better informed on the history and theology of the dogma.

T. H. L. PARKER

Church and State in England. By CYRIL GARBETT, Archbishop of York. Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1950. 320 pp. 15s. net.

DR GARBETT has become the acknowledged spokesman of those within the Church of England who are dissatisfied with the present relation of that Church to the State, or at any rate with certain features of the establishment. For instance the Prime Minister, who may not be a member of that or any Church, virtually appoints its bishops. The British Parliament, whatever the ecclesiastical affiliations, if any, of its members, has the last word in matters of liturgical or administrative change. And a secular tribunal, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, may be called on to decide appeals in cases which may involve doctrine. The dissatisfaction becomes disquiet in view of world-wide trends towards a positively anti-Christian or at all events a purely secular totalitarianism. Even in Britain "there is the possibility that in the future a Totalitarian State might wish to control the Church for its own purposes".

Doubtless the present situation is anomalous, but it has its roots deep in history. To explain it the Archbishop rightly chooses the "historical approach", and traces the development from Anglo-Saxon times down to the present day. He claims no originality for his historical chapters, but in spite of his heavy responsibilities he has made astonishingly full use of the most recent authorities, and the reader will find him an agreeable and reliable guide to a complicated strand in the national history. No one will complain of the personal reminiscences which "illustrate or lighten the argument". They not seldom afford inside views of more recent events which Dr Garbett has himself helped to shape. Moreover he is conspicuously fair to all. The faults and failings of the Church of England in the past, especially its intolerance and lack of social awareness, are recognised and deplored, and an admirable spirit of Christian sympathy is manifest throughout.

The main purpose of the book is to put forward proposals for reform designed to give the Church a greater measure of freedom from State control. These proposals are exceedingly moderate. The Archbishop is well aware of the advantages attending the present arrangement. Certain valuable spiritual freedoms are guaranteed to individuals, and opportunity is given for a nation-wide minis-

tration of religion. The existence of a National Church is, so far, a national profession of faith. Only as a last resort would he be prepared to seek for the drastic remedy of disestablishment. Short of that he would like the dioceses (apparently identified with the Cathedral Chapters) to have "a recognised right to be consulted in the choice of a new bishop". He would have a new and highly complicated machinery set up whereby the Church itself could introduce generally agreed reforms in the liturgy and the Canon Law without debate and vote in Parliament. And he would like the Church to have its own supreme judicatory in spiritual causes.

The book is primarily addressed to members of the Church of England who are concerned about the future of that Church, and it is perhaps rash for a member of the Church of Scotland to comment on its proposals at all. But he does have a certain *locus standi*. In the strange course of history, he has come to exercise as a British citizen a fragment, however microscopic, of the power of the "Supreme Governor on Earth of the Church of England". As a member of a Church which is, in Dr Garbett's words, "Established and yet Free" he is bound to sympathise with the demand of a sister Church for spiritual freedom, while recognising that the Scottish model of Church-State relations cannot be followed in England. Dr Garbett's reasons why this is so are both interesting and instructive. "Scotland has religious unity and uniformity to a degree not known in England." Hence in England there is a suspicion, unreasonable perhaps, that an increase of ecclesiastical freedom may well lead to unwelcome changes in certain directions. "The laity has always had a much more assured place in the government and administration of their Church than has been the case in England." This has indeed been one of the strong points in Presbyterianism, making for a compact ecclesiastical structure broadly representative of the whole Church. The General Assembly consisting of equal numbers of ministers and elders seems to be more of a focal point for Church life than the purely clerical Convocations of the Church of England have ever been, or the National Assembly has yet had time to become. The Archbishop hardly seems to have considered whether the Church of England has in fact a representative organ of Church Government which might justly claim the confidence or at least the acquiescence of the general membership of the Church. Lastly "the independence of the Church with Jesus Christ as its only head" has been a confessional principle of the Church of Scotland since the Reformation, though not till 1921 was it acknowledged by the State after long struggles. The fissiparous nature of Presbyterianism has often been made matter of mirth by Anglicans, but our Secessions and Disruptions were grounded in loyalty to the principle of

the spiritual freedom of the Church and have proved to be the means by which it was finally attained. One hopes that the Archbishop's modest demands will be granted, for one can hardly visualise him leading an English Disruption on points such as these. It is not that the Anglican system cannot stand unsupported by establishment. The contrary has been proved in Scotland, Ireland, Wales and in the United States. But there must be many, Anglicans and non-Anglicans, who feel that with all its anomalies and anachronisms, there is something which the Church of England has which is denied to her daughters. And it must be said that no legal arrangement, whether Establishment or Disestablishment, or something in between, will guarantee that the Totalitarian State will leave the Church unmolested. The only guarantee of freedom is the faith and steadfastness of its people under trial.

Dr Garbett is so well-informed and generous in his treatment of the Church of Scotland that one is sorry to have to point out two misconceptions. The first is evidently a mere slip. At the beginning of Chapter Two he thinks a simple answer can be given to the question when was the Church of Scotland established.—"By the Act of Union passed in the sixth year of the reign of Queen Anne"! The second is possibly more serious in some respects. On p. 313 he says the relationship of the English Free Churches "with the Established Presbyterian Church of Scotland is very close". As a matter of fact the Church of Scotland has no official relationship with any except the Presbyterian Church of England. Personal relationships are another matter, and those are at least as close with members of the Church of England; and our friends are apt to be among those who rather suspect the use that will be made of the liberties for which Dr Garbett pleads so convincingly.

JOHN H. S. BURLEIGH

Le fondement théologique des missions. By HENRI DE LUBAC. Editions du Seuil, Paris.

ORIGINALLY given in the France of 1941, these two lectures present a simple Roman Catholic view of the theology of missions. A first section declares the basis of missions to be in the will of Christ, as exhibited in His own command, in the Biblical history, and in the self-consciousness of the Church. One welcomes the large place given to Biblical exegesis, and notably to the missionary call of Israel. Our attention is drawn to the dilemma of Israel, the nation poised between its exclusive election and its universal mission, a dilemma resolved in the work of Christ. One thinks of the outworking of this *motif* in the passion narrative of our Lord, and

wishes that this aspect of the atonement were given more thought in Protestant circles. True dynamic catholicity and missionary purpose are seen to be in inseparable unity.

The next section goes back over this ground, to investigate the motives for missionary work. De Lubac cannot agree with the "Rigorists" that apart from missions the pagans are irrevocably destined to hell (for "the grace of Christ may be at work everywhere under countless anonymous forms") nor with the "Laxists" who almost imply that Christianity is not absolutely necessary. Salvation is not to be thought of "negatively" as escape from damnation, but positively as the realisation of the law of love. "Les missions ne sont pas tout une affaire de vie ou de mort que de plénitude de vie." The motive of the missionary will be clarity—for clarity is always universal in its range—and the means of salvation consist in the planting of the visible Church among men.

The second lecture deals with objections. There might be theological objections to missionary work; and de Lubac draws his examples from Luther and Calvin, whom, however, he treats in no polemic spirit but with sympathy. We hear of Luther saying, for instance, that the Turks were specially appointed as the scourge of God, and that any attempt at their conversion would be contrary to Providence; and from this de Lubac passes on to the notion of "accursed nations", notably the children of Ham; this notion, apparently, proves troublesome within the household of faith, *jusque chez les théologians catholiques* (p. 61). The Church, however, denies the existence of accursed souls, much more of accursed nations. We have also the objection that conversions endanger the social order—measures to safeguard it or to risk the danger must be left to the discretion of missionaries. And there is the objection of Schlumberger that Christianity is the religion of Europe only. Can we answer that human nature universally supplies a basis on which Christianity can be built? Not without care; we must be suspicious of too swift an appeal to "survivals of a primitive revelation", or to the existence of a basic and common "natural religion" of which Christianity represents the extension and fulfilment. The idea of "human nature" too easily over-simplifies the actuality of man "à la fois déchu et appelé". We might begin to discern here a softening of the rationalistic Thomist view of "nature"; but not for long, for "every soul is naturally Christian . . . because at the bottom of this soul shines the image of God". If Christianity is to be the religion of the world, it must be enriched by the participation in its life of all the diverse cultural heritages of mankind.

A final section deals with the most serious of all objections—that of racialism. The subject is still, alas, topical—in South Africa,

notably, and in the menace of anti-semitism. De Lubac attacks Rosenberg's *Myth of Blood* with a scientific refutation; but finally sees that it is a matter of one faith against another. The book ends with a passage of passionate devotion and prayer.

An appendix consists of several pages of citations from two articles by R. P. de Menasce, O.P. The first is a discussion of Kraemer's missionary theology, and is the only passage of controversy with Protestantism in the book: it goes deeper into fundamental principles than the rest of the book. He thinks that Kraemer takes his starting point in sin rather than in God, in destruction rather than in the plenitude of being; he smiles over Kraemer's *joie de scandale*, and thinks that his violent contrasts between God and Nature are designed for their rhetorical effect! This appendix seems rather anarthrous, being by a different author and on a much more technical theological level, and being much too short to develop the issues involved.

JAMES BARR

Some Aspects of the New Testament Ministry. By G. W. H. LAMPE. S.P.C.K. 20 pp. 1s. 3d. net.

THIS lecture delivered in Queen's College, Birmingham, in 1948 has had the misfortune, the author points out, of being published when the path it treads has become somewhat well-worn. Nevertheless as its problem is an important and a continuing one, it will be welcomed for its compact learning, its sobriety and the freshness of its approach. Mr Lampe believes that in interrogating the New Testament for help with the problem of the ministry we must fully realise the vast difference, amounting to total unlikeness, that subsists between the primitive Church, that Spirit-filled community of the redeemed awaiting an imminent Parousia, and the respectable Churches of to-day. For the understanding of the New Testament conception of the ministry he finds the clue in two word-series, cognates of ἀποστέλλειν and διακονεῖν, and shows how the double aspect of ministry, divine commissioning and service to God and the Church—runs through the entire New Testament including the Synoptic Gospels, and how everywhere it is the *charisma* of ministry and not the office that stands out, though the need at least for an official ministry is already apparent. The use of the word Apostle as applied to the Twelve and others is carefully studied, as also the Jewish Shaliach-concept which, with Holl, is held to contribute nothing to the New Testament usage. The local ministries of bishops, presbyters and deacons are briefly discussed, and various influences operative in sub-Apostolic times are suggested as possible

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factors in the emergence of the threefold ministry that meets us in the Ignatian Epistles. The conclusion is that "the study of the New Testament gives us the assurance that, so long as commissioning and *diakonia* are its keynotes, the essentials of the apostolic ministry of the first century are present and operative in our totally different world". This at least does not assert that the commissioning *must* take place sacramentally through the agency of an hierarchical order; so that we may all join him in echoing St. Paul: "Inasmuch as I am an *apostolos* . . . I glorify my *diakonia*."

JOHN H. S. BURLEIGH

The Dilemma of the Arts. By VLADIMIR WEIDLÉ (translated by Martin Jarret-Kerr). S.C.M. Press. 10s.

THE assumption of the disintegration of community throughout the industrial world is regarded by contemporary "writers" as a modern axiom. "These fragments I have shored against my ruins", wrote Mr Eliot in *The Waste Land.* The line epitomised the attitude of two generations of intellectuals to the decay of Western culture and the poem crystallised their orientation. Professor Weidlé's thesis is within this orbit. He traces the dilemma of the arts to a decline that began at the Renaissance. The Middle Ages are presented as the summit of Christian Culture. "Then", he writes (p. 1), "the arts of Christian Europe remained indissolubly tied to the religious life and that meant the whole of life. . . . The artist worked not merely for the Church but in the Church. He did more than provide the needs of worship; he took part in it, for the planting of his work was an act of adoration and its growth to maturity was one long prayer." With this condition Professor Weidlé contrasts the artist's position to-day (p. 101). "The creative personality, lost in deep loneliness, shuts itself more and more within itself, and increasingly abandons its work of creating. It is easy enough to invite the modern writer to return to the world of to-day, but that is to forget this world has no room for him. It would be no solution of the problem set by the destiny of painting or poetry to-day, to compel the author of some complex or cerebral poem, or of pictures of the same kind, to paint posters or to write an ode in praise of rubber soles." The artist's dilemma then is that he requires community and communion for the proper exercise of his art and yet his characteristic action in the modern world is withdrawal (p. 101). "A religious renewal of the world alone can save art. . . . We must work to make loneliness no longer inevitable for the artist."

It is not difficult to approve the generalisations, and yet the statement: "We must work to make loneliness no longer inevitable

for the artist" is, it seems to me, an over-simplification of the issues. (Obviously one does not work for this particular objective.) The fault that I find in the manner of the statement quoted, I find elsewhere writ larger. It may originate to some degree in Professor Weidlé's Olympian approach. In his comparatively short book he concerns himself with the *Arts* of Europe—and their dilemma. Perforce he deals with them as if they were one—and the word "artist" makes do for a host. Inevitably *he* [the artist] is not particular enough. Such references as those on p. 12: "[he] asserted himself and enclosed himself within his own specific calling and within the irreducible confines of his own person. Then he deserted the community . . . ", are too naïve and suggest a greater concern for a thesis than for the works presumed under scrutiny. On one occasion at least significant distinctions are sacrificed to formulae. Thus Holderlin, Kleist, Coleridge, Keats, Bratynski, Flaubert, Carlyle, Browning, De Quincey, Wordsworth and numerous others including Cezanne, Valery and T. S. Eliot are classified as Romantics—and are accordingly stigmatised—"romanticism is the genuine *mal du siècle*, the disease of a century". When Professor Weidlé finds in Leonardo da Vinci's scientific approach to his art, a relationship with Romanticism, one becomes interested in the writer's entrenched position rather than in the speculation. There is here, the pursuit of particulars, but not unfortunately with that disinterestedness, that circumspection and humility that surely should characterise a critic's approach to works of genius, to works which will justify themselves by their differences rather than by their conformity to principles. The book may be commended for its wide interest and for many stimulating passages but I recommend it with a caveat.

GEORGE BRUCE

The Blessing of the Holy Spirit. By J. E. FISON, Canon Residentiary of Rochester Cathedral (vi + 226 pp., including general and scriptural indexes). Longmans, Green and Co., 1950. 8s. 6d.; in paper covers, 5s. 6d.

THIS is a scholarly and stimulating book and it is to be hoped that it will be very widely read. The first two chapters are introductory, providing a survey of recent and current theological trends and an indication of the author's general position. He believes that "the supreme need of the Christian church is a rediscovery of the blessing of the Holy Spirit", and he regards as the two main obstacles to creative thinking about the Holy Spirit "man's incurable tendency to idolatry" ("to replace the Holy Spirit by some more tangible stake within the Godhead") and "the Holy Spirit's incurable tendency to self-effacement".

The main body of the book (pp. 36-147) consists of a careful, scholarly and very illuminating study of the biblical material. There are chapters on "Old Testament Holiness", "Spirit in the Old Testament", "The Silence of the Synoptists", "Pentecost and Paul", "The Johannine Paraclete", and two detached notes on words. Canon Fison makes good use of the researches of C. K. Barrett and others and of the notable insights of Martin Buber. He traces the remarkable parallelism between the Old and New Testament material—for example, that between the silence of the pre-exilic writing prophets both about holiness and spirit and the Synoptists' silence about the Holy Spirit. In both these silences he sees an indication, not of the absence of the Spirit, but of a significant reinterpretation and a correction of mistaken ideas. He quotes with approval Barrett's words: "Lack of glory and a cup of suffering were His [i.e. Jesus'] Messianic secret and part of His poverty was the absence of all the signs of the Spirit of God." At the same time, "the Holy Spirit was most fully revealed in Jesus Christ, even if the interpretation of that revelation had to wait till after Pentecost both for Pauline and also above all Johannine light". "The climax and crown of the biblical revelation of the Holy Spirit" Canon Fison sees in the Fourth Gospel.

The remaining four chapters are an attempt to draw out the practical implications of this biblical study. Chapter VIII is headed "The Peril of Idolatry" and deals with "the idolatry of the book, the idolatry of the ministry and the idolatry of the sacrament". "These three idolatrous tendencies", we are told, "are held together in a fourth idolatrous apotheosis of the church." It is the author's contention that the various fundamentalisms, biblical, ministerial and eucharistic, alike represent idolatrous replacements of the Third Person of the Trinity, and that the notion of an extension of the incarnation in church or sacrament has the effect of ousting "in practice, if not in theory, the Holy Spirit from the Godhead". But idolatry is not the only danger. So in Chapter IX the author goes on to deal with "Apostasy and Blasphemy", meaning by the one the loss of all sense of the supernatural, by which the Church comes to be regarded as merely a human organisation and the sacraments and ministry as optional extras or matters of convenience, and by the other the denial of the work of the Holy Spirit, where He is at work, or the claiming to possess Him, where He is not. The last two chapters, "The Triune Name" and "Holy Baptism", attempt positive construction; though containing much that is suggestive, they are, in the opinion of the present reviewer, the least satisfying part of the book.

Canon Fison has a very wide knowledge of modern theology, at

any rate as far as it is available in English, and his reading has not been limited to theology. His biblical insight into the deceitfulness of the human, particularly the ecclesiastical, heart is extraordinarily penetrating and he has given us in a very readable form a great deal that is tremendously valuable. He displays a refreshing fairness and charity towards those with whom he disagrees (e.g. with reference to liberal theology on p. 4 f.)—though just occasionally over-simplification has perhaps betrayed him into unintentional unfairness (e.g. is he fair to Barth, Brunner and Niebuhr on p. 13?). One might perhaps wish he had made more clear the sense in which he uses the ambiguous word "mysticism". Perhaps too one might wonder whether he takes eschatology quite seriously enough. Does he rather overdo the *realised* eschatology of St. John? Is the exposition of the Triune Name in terms of "law, liberty and reciprocity" rather too facile (Chapter X)? The argument in the middle of p. 145 (the order of the words "took", "blessed", "brake" and "gave") struck the present reviewer as decidedly "rabbinic". But we are very greatly indebted to Canon Fison for his scholarly, illuminating and practical book. It is highly to be recommended.

The book has been printed remarkably carefully. The only misprint noticed was "yourself" for "yourselves" on p. 148, unless "sterilised" on p. 46, which seems a little odd, is also a misprint.

C. E. B. Cranfield

The Doctor's Profession. By Rev. D. T. Jenkins. S.C.M. Press. 4s. 6d.

The majority of doctors are more concerned with practice than profession, whether the profession be the group to which they belong or the acceptance of a philosophy of life.

This book is an attempt by some of them aided by a theologian to face up to their responsibilities in modern society and, as inheritors of the Christian tradition in Medicine, consciously to maintain the highest ethical and spiritual standards.

Protestant and Roman Catholic doctors met in group discussion with representatives of the *Christian News Letter* and *Christian Frontier*, "an organisation of Christian laity, whose aim is to promote more effective Christian thought and action in relation to the life of Christians in secular society".

They discovered that ethical and moral questions, mental health, spiritual healing and the whole problem of human suffering brought an inescapable challenge to the Christian doctor to adopt positive attitudes and above all to maintain that ideal of disinterestedness in a profession which is threatened by very subtle forces.

This all demands a high sense of responsibility, but to whom?

To the patient, society, the State or to God? The theologian suggests that a theology of medicine is required if Christian doctors are to understand their duty clearly. But this means inevitable controversy, and why bring the quibbles of the Schoolmen into the troubles of the sick room?

In nine cases out of ten, it seems infinitely more important to the doctor to *do* the right thing to the patient at the right time than to feel or to talk rightly to him. Of course he must cultivate a passable bedside manner, if only as window dressing calculated to get the patient to take his advice and medicine, and, in former days, to pay his fee. In other words, the conscientious doctor knows that he must above all be a technician if he is to practice modern scientific medicine. But what is to guide and control the effects of his technical skills? Their influence over the origin, maintenance, reproduction and end of life is enormous. Abortion, contraception, insemination, sterilisation and euthanasia are atomic weapons in the medical sphere. "There is no greater illusion than that which assumes that men can safely be content to produce their results without a thought for their consequences in the life of the world."

The doctor cannot safely accept the current standards of society, or he may be led to use the torture chamber and the extermination van. He is even challenged by the Christian Gospel in his humane desire to relieve pain at all costs, or in his passion for making people fit. Fit for what? he must ask. A man who is fighting fit is often only too fit to fight.

A fine plea is made in the chapter on the Doctor, the State and Society that the Christian doctor should use whatever opportunities come his way to help the wayward, the confused and the lonely people of the modern world.

Regarding medical education, the Scottish system of offering a combined degree in arts and medicine receives commendation, for the career of the medical student is notoriously apt to be a one-track affair.

Some sane things are said about spiritual healing which is not in a position to contribute much to practical medical work, however much there may be of wishful thinking and wistful hoping.

The chapter on psychiatry is full of sound sense and the psychiatrist is warned not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think.

The work of medical missions is described as one of the finest and noblest aspects of the life of bourgeois society through which we have just passed. The suggestion that they are but a temporary outlet for the uneasy conscience of the exploiting nations is dismissed. But their future is shown to lie in relationship to the developing colonial

government or national health services. The motive for medical missions has in the past been a mixture of compassion and pragmatism, confirmed by the sense of obedience to a command to preach and heal, and a feeling of simply following Him, in healing and casting out demons.

The theological justification of Medical Missions is, to the reviewer's mind, linked with the two laws of the Kingdom. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" implies compassion and consideration for the sick. But the command to love the Lord thy God also implies that the primitive (and who of us are far removed from him?) must be able to believe that God is on the side of the angels and not the demons. It is only by vindicating His character and will as Saviour and Healer instead of slayer and tormentor that man can love Him, and this can only be done by breaking the power of the demons as exemplified in their minds by disease. The Gospel for them must be a good spelling of God's name.

The book is a call to the Christian doctor to pull his full weight in Church, Community and State. He has no vocational exemption from going to Church.

"The profession of Medicine is, to-day, at one of the great turning points of its history. Its future may depend more than it is possible to realise upon the faithfulness to their vocation here and now of doctors who are also Christians."

CLEMENT C. CHESTERMAN

Parochial Sermons of Bishop Chavasse (Second Series). By F. J. CHAVASSE, D.D., Bishop of Liverpool, 1900-1923. Edited by the Rev. H. D. S. Sweetapple, D.D. S.P.C.K. vii + 213 pp. 9s. 6d.

DR SWEETAPPLE has here put forward a collection of Bishop Chavasse's sermons, preached in St. Peter-le-Bailey Church in Oxford, as a companion to an earlier series. In this are sermons for the Sundays after Trinity, as well as for those Saints' Days that fall within the period.

The manner of the preacher seems to be apparent in the written words; one would judge him to have been quiet and gentle, sympathetic and persuasive, and always deeply serious. A quiet earnestness is the chief characteristic of these sermons, with an occasional vivid sentence like "Idolatry is loving out of God" (p. 17). Perhaps most representative of his manner is the sermon on animals.

Has this preacher anything to say to our age, so different from his own? Yes; but probably only to a certain kind of reader; to those happy ones who are able to live (even if only to some degree) in the intellectual atmosphere of the close of the last century. To

them, Bishop Chavasse will still speak with a convincing voice, and they will be moved as they no doubt cannot be by the nervous sermons typical of our nervous age. But to those who have the burden of modern times laid upon them, these sermons will seem like whispers from a remote past.

T. H. L. PARKER

F. H. Bradley. By W. F. LOFTHOUSE. Epworth Press.

THIS book is a biographical study of an outstanding figure in philosophy. What the reader will find in it is a certain amount of information about Bradley's life (which was lived under the shadow of bad health), a valuable account of a little known early work which Bradley wrote on the subject of history, and a painstaking attempt to present in non-technical language Bradley's main work on ethics, logic and metaphysics. What he will not find is much discussion of some of the questions about Bradley which are most interesting at the present day. How far is Bradley indebted to Hegel? Why did Hegelianism take so long to come to this country and why is British academic Hegelianism, unlike Marxism and Existentialism, two other movements which owe something if only by way of reaction to Hegel, no longer a living influence? Is Bradley's ethical teaching compatible with a belief in democracy? Only the first of these questions is so much as touched upon by Dr Lofthouse and the soundness of his judgment in the slight reference he makes to it, leaves one regretting that he had not dealt with the others.

One feels that the book would have been better if Dr Lofthouse had kept his interest in Bradley and his interest in the Christian religion from getting quite so mixed up with one another. It is all very well for him to say: "Most of those who read this book will probably care more about their hold on their faith than about any philosophic system". One hopes so, but even this type of reader, when he buys a cookery book does not want remarks on the religious significance of food continually interspersed amongst the recipes. The comparison is not entirely unfair, for Bradley was very much a philosopher's philosopher. What the main concern of those who seek to understand him is, is immaterial. But they must be prepared to take a serious interest in philosophical questions for their own sake.

The compatibility of Bradley's conclusions with the Christian Faith is, of course, an important matter and one is grateful to Dr Lofthouse for raising it. Can the Christian assertion of the difference between God and man be stated in terms of a dialectic in which differences are treated as relations and the terms in the relation are

thought of as being modified by the relation in which they stand to one another? This is fairly to take the sting out of differences, and while the difference between God and man has had the sting taken out of it, that has been done by grace and not by logical necessity.

A more technical treatment of Bradley's philosophy might have enabled Dr Lofthouse to deal with this type of question, a task which he is obviously capable of undertaking. As it is, the reader who is told on p. 261 that of all the idealists Bradley deserves the title of defender of the faith and on p. 205 that his God is not the God of the Christian faith is left confused on the very point where Dr Lofthouse wishes him to be clear. And the panegyric on p. 19 would surely be just as distasteful to Bradley as it is to the Christian theologian.

I. Henderson

William Paton. By Margaret Sinclair. S.C.M. Press. 15s.

This is both a modern Church History and the life of an individual who was very near the centre of the whole Ecumenical Movement ever since "Edinburgh, 1910". It says much for Miss Sinclair's skill and sense of proportion that the man is not eclipsed by the Movement nor the Movement narrowed down to the man. His friends knew that William Paton's life and character would not be easily described. He moved very swiftly from one scene to another and one subject to another. It would have been so easy to select one or two striking features and to lose the others which were just as striking. Miss Sinclair has got it all in small compass—the exuberance, the prodigious capacity for work and travel and endurance, the amazing memory for names and people, the power of concentration and relaxation. His weaknesses are there too, but again in due proportion—the tendency to exaggerate, the very occasional intolerance, the quite unusual competence that could so easily have passed over into self-confidence and vanity. And the biography confirms the opinion of those who knew him best that Bill Paton (it must be "Just Bill" and not "Just William") was a man of exceptional gifts. He had natural advantages which stood him in good stead in the gruelling work to which he was called—a tough physical constitution, the ability to enjoy travel and to work long hours. At the Tambaram Conference (p. 220) he worked from 6.45 a.m. till 11 p.m. every day ("not so bad for the tropics") and he could peg away at his correspondence or writing one of his many books under conditions of heat, noise and distraction which would have made other minds give up the unequal struggle. His intellectual ability is brought out very clearly in his grasp of the

essentials of a missionary theology, his far-sighted views on all questions of missionary policy and his power to present the deepest things in speech and writing with power and clarity.

His natural endowments, apparent though they are, were dwarfed by the work of God's Grace in the heart. These pages reveal a man of strong, even aggressive personality, but all his abounding energy was canalised and directed by a single overwhelming purpose. He was a Christian, a converted man, more than Churchman or Church-statesman, an evangelist more than a strategist, a disciple more than a teacher. The missionary motive had its origin and daily nourishment in him in the love of Christ seen in His Cross. Hence all his thinking about the work of the Church was evangelical and he was not misled by the attraction and confusion of the immediate crisis or contemporary problem, however great their demands on his thought. His concern was with the preaching of the Word and the life of the Beloved Community. Hence the mission, as he saw, could not consent to become a branch of inter-church aid. The mission stood for "the divine imperative upon the Church as a whole to give itself to the evangelisation of the world" (p. 260) and the missionary impulse therefore meant missionaries and could not be satisfied with sending money. This central motive drove him on to tremendous exertion and he had the power to infect others with his own enthusiasm. As a writer and speaker he was in great demand and he accepted every possible invitation as another opportunity to exalt the claims of Christ and His world-wide Church on the hearts and consciences of men and women, particularly of the younger generation.

The story of this many-sided life is also the history of our times, and it unfolds itself in many lands as the man moves rapidly to and fro. Those who do not know the story of the early impetus of the Student Christian Movement will read these pages with growing surprise. They will see how much the Church owes to it and how much the world-wide mission has derived from it. They will see the theological earnestness and evangelical passion of the undergraduates of the first decades of the century. They will also read with profit of the achievements of the International Missionary Council on behalf of the Churches and of the preparation made in every land from the end of the first world war to the formation of the World Council of Churches. The book is a storehouse of learning for the activities springing out of the contacts of the Societies and Churches with each other and the challenges they could meet and accept because they stood together. To name them is to run over all the vast concerns of the world-wide Christian mission—the supply of Christian literature, religious freedom, missions and Gov-

ernments, the missionary and the national, the training of the indigenous ministry, the Christian colleges—and so on. It is also to touch on the movement of the Churches which goes deeper than co-operation and drives them to seek visible expression for their consciousness of a fundamental "belonging together". It is quite certain that, with the growing complexity and magnitude of World Council and I.M.C. commitments, no single man is likely to hold the central position which Bill Paton held in relation to both. For that reason as well as for the vivid portrayal of this great servant of Christ his countless friends all over the world will be greatly indebted to this book.

There are two errors in the text—on p. 78, line 6, read "Indian" for "Italian", and on p. 226, line 23, read "it will be" for "it was be."

J. W. C. DOUGALL

Dr Aggrey. By WILLIAM M. MACARTNEY. S.C.M. Press. 106 pp. 5s.

"I HAVE visited the White House, the Congressional Halls, and the beautiful Congressional Library. But the most wonderful thing I have seen is Aggrey." It was J. H. Oldham who paid this spontaneous tribute to the man, and his words give weighty support to Mr Macartney's own estimate of Aggrey—"one of the outstandingly big men of our generation". Here, then, is a biography that was worth writing—and, thanks to Mr Macartney, is worth reading.

Aggrey was the product of a Wesleyan Methodist Mission on the Gold Coast, and he never forgot the debt he owed to "the self-sacrifice of those who came out to the white man's grave". Naturally gifted with intellectual ability and powers of leadership, his life was shaped and directed by the Christian Gospel towards the highest and noblest ends of service. In him we see yet another undeniable justification of Christian Missions and of the Faith and Spirit they seek to spread. More "Aggreys" in Africa to-day, and among all the nations indeed, are the primary requirement for a real solution of the great problems of human division and strife.

The biggest problem which this outstanding African tackled was the "colour-bar". By his own firm grasp and practice of the Christian Gospel and its discipline he saw the sordid situation in its true perspective, and arrived at the simple, yet profoundly right answer to it—"mutual respect, issuing in co-operation". And for Africans, he told them plainly, that meant raising themselves to win respect. "I want all my people to be educated in the large sense, in heart, hand, and head, and thus render Africa indispensable . . . ". Negative methods, anti-white propaganda, non-co-operation, revenge, he could not tolerate. His doctrine was positive and constructive

through and through. That it was practical he proved in his own life: by his superb Christian example, his academic achievements, his powers of oratory, and, perhaps best proof of all, by the amazing effect of his ministry in two poverty-stricken Negro congregations in North Carolina (half of his life was spent in the U.S.A.).

Of Aggrey's primitive origins and his rise to prominence as a Christian leader of international repute Mr Macartney gives us a very attractive and inspiring account in this concise and competent biography. The robust personality of the man gets across to us from many pages that are lit up with his exceptional sense of humour, which bore him buoyantly over frequent waves of opposition, prejudice, and injustice. His parable of the eagle, and other quotable items, will rejoice the preacher who has not gleaned in this field before.

Above all, however, this book is a very timely and considerable contribution to our understanding of inter-racial relations and how the problem may best be approached. It is a problem very much in the forefront of the picture to-day, basically important to the commonwealth of mankind; and it is going to demand solution with ever-increasing urgency in the days ahead. Further still, this book stands for Africa and Africa's future, forcibly reminding us that her native peoples are emerging from the darkness and are claiming their rightful place and part among the enlightened members of world-society. This claim, too, is something no effective planning for a stable world-order can neglect or mismanage. Aggrey, always a great patriot, would assuredly rejoice in this continuing significance of his life-story for the future of his people, which his biographer here has ably brought out.

One cannot help adding that a film of this modern African hero would do even greater service than the written story. Mr Macartney might well turn his pen now to the script which such a purpose requires.

A. M. Gibson

PHILOSOPHERS AND THEOLOGIANS ON THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL

by The Rev. Professor D. M. BAILLIE

It is a curious fact that while the problem of free will has been long and widely discussed by both philosophers and theologians in the modern world, it has been largely in two separate compartments, the one set seldom conferring with the other, or even overhearing what the other has to say. Sometimes they seem almost to be talking of two different things.

I

Among philosophers one may say that it has been "orthodox" to assert and defend the freedom of the human will against those schools that would explain it away or show it to be impossible. On the whole, it has been the sceptical, materialistic or naturalistic philosophers that have denied the freedom of the will. If we take the three great ideas of God, Freedom and Immortality, we may say that it has usually been the philosophers who denied God and immortality that also denied freedom. And those who have defended freedom have usually done so in the interests of the higher life of man, because it seemed plain that if free will is an illusion, moral obligation is meaningless. The famous argument of Immanuel Kant was conceived in that spirit. Starting with the consciousness of moral obligation as something which has immediate certainty, he proceeded to the conclusion that therefore there must be such a thing as freedom of the will by which a man *can* make the right choice. A man must be free to do what he *ought* to do; otherwise "ought" becomes meaningless. This is the famous argument that "ought" implies "can"; moral obligation implies free will. It is in that spirit that philosophers have usually defended the freedom of the will, and those who have followed this line have done so with the air of being "on the side of the angels".

But when we turn from the philosophers to the theologians, especially those in the tradition of the Reformation, we find

something surprisingly different. We find that the line of argument outlined above ("I ought, therefore I can") is very like what has been repudiated by theologians as the Pelagian heresy. The argument that "I ought, therefore I can" is indeed precisely what Pelagius was teaching in opposition to St. Augustine. To St. Augustine the will of unregenerate man is wholly enslaved by sin, so that though he ought to obey God and keep His commandments, he is utterly unable to do so. The regenerate man is able to make the right choice, but it is entirely divine grace that enables him to do it, and this grace is omnipotent and irresistible. This may seem to leave no room at all for freedom. Yet St. Augustine does in fact defend free will against those who would deny it, because to him freedom of the will does not mean the *ability* to make the right choice. So man must be described as having free will, because whatever choice he makes, it is his own will that chooses, even if it is true that as unregenerate he *cannot* make the right choice. Thus, according to St. Augustine, man has free will in a sense, even when enslaved by sin.

But when we come to the Protestant Reformers, we find them actually denying free will to unregenerate man altogether, and claiming that they have St. Augustine with them. Martin Luther's famous work *De servo arbitrio*, written in refutation of the views of Erasmus, hotly and uncompromisingly denied the *liberum arbitrium* of which the Scholastics had spoken. Calvin, while allowing that a man acts voluntarily and not by compulsion, maintains that if that is all that can be said, it is not worthy of the name of free will, and he regards the use of the phrase as misleading and dangerous. Unregenerate man does not possess free will. His will is enslaved by sin, and he is unable to will what is good. It is this *inability* that he is chiefly concerned to emphasise, and here he can fairly claim that he has St. Augustine with him.

Now this is obviously the very opposite of what Kant was concerned to establish. It is a flat denial of the principle that "ought implies can". In many ears it sounds like a very perverse denial. But Professor Emil Brunner in our own time has gone even further, and maintained that "ought" implies "cannot"! "If I feel I *ought* to do right, it is a sign that I cannot do it. If I could do it, there would be no question of 'ought'

about it at all. The sense of 'ought' shows me the Good at an infinite impassable distance from my will."[1] This brings to a sharp point the contention which has run through so much of the Protestant theological tradition, denying the very principle of Kant's argument for the freedom of the will.

I have heard it suggested that the truth of Kant's argument becomes clearer if we add a few words to it and say: "I ought, therefore I can *if I choose*." If that is what Kant meant, then everybody would agree with him. Then his dictum would mean merely that there cannot be a moral obligation to perform an act which is physically impossible, such as rescuing a drowning man when one cannot swim oneself, or escaping from a prison camp when one is bound with chains. In that sense all would agree that there is no "ought" except in cases where I *could* do the thing *if I chose*. But it is impossible to reconcile the parties in that way, because that is not what Kant meant. He meant: I ought *to choose* this, therefore I *can choose it*. To him the good will was what mattered. The moral act was the act of *choice*. And what he meant by the assertion of freedom was that man is always free to make his choice between the good and the evil. Every man has at every moment the power to make the right choice. And that is precisely what the tradition of Protestant theology has condemned as the Pelagian heresy, maintaining that man is not free or able of himself to do what he ought to do.

It is easy to dismiss this paradoxical position as making nonsense of the moral life and of all moral responsibility. But it is not often noticed how the paradox appears to be borne out by the language that we normally and naturally use in describing certain moral situations. Let us imagine the case of a man who in a "police state" is sent to prison for speaking out against injustice. That stops his activities for the time being, and so long as he is in prison he does not tell himself that he *ought* at once to return to the charge, for he *cannot* do that, as he is a prisoner. But then he is released from prison, and he knows he ought to take up the struggle again and speak out. Let us suppose, further, that he finds he has not the courage

[1] Emil Brunner, *The Divine Imperative* (Engl. tr.), p. 74. It is only fair to add that Brunner distinguishes between *formal* freedom, which every man possesses, and *material* freedom, which the enslaved will does not possess.

to do it. He *ought*, but he *cannot* bring himself to do it, though he is physically free. And looking back afterwards, he says: "I know I ought to have done it, but I simply couldn't." Any one of us might quite naturally use similar language any day about some lapse of courage in some difficult situation yesterday. "I *ought* to have acted, but when the moment came, I hadn't the courage, I couldn't do it." Do we mean that kind of language seriously? If not, why do we so naturally use it? But if we do mean it, we are acknowledging situations in which "ought" does not imply "can", in which in some sense we are not free to make the right choice.

Moreover, there are other situations in which we say that a man is not free to make the wrong choice. If a good man whom we know well is accused of a very mean and dishonourable action, we say: "I do not believe he did it: he *could not* do such a thing, he is quite *incapable* of such a base action." If we mean that seriously, as I believe in some sense we do, we imply that a man, in so far as he is a good man (and of course it is a matter of degree) is incapable of doing evil. He lacks the freedom to make the wrong choice.

If these things are true, we are left with the question: where does freedom come in? What area of life remains for the operation of what philosophers and theologians have called free will? And what *is* freedom of the will?

II

All this suggests that there must be different senses of "free will", or perhaps we should say different kinds or degrees of freedom. And of course we are not the first to make that discovery. Let us look at some of the ways in which a distinction has been drawn between different sorts or grades of freedom.

(*a*) The most famous distinction of all is that which goes back to St. Augustine, between the lesser freedom of *posse non peccare* and the greater freedom of *non posse peccare*. The lesser freedom, by which a man is able to avoid sinning, though he is also able to sin, Augustine ascribed to man before the Fall. The greater freedom of being unable to sin at all he ascribed to redeemed man in heaven, and primarily of course to God, who can only act according to His nature, which is wholly good, and who therefore cannot sin. Whatever freedom may

be possessed by unregenerate fallen man on earth, in St. Augustine's view, it is not either of these kinds.

(*b*) There is a certain similarity between this distinction and the well-known distinction made by the Cambridge philosopher Henry Sidgwick in 1888 between "Good" or "Rational Freedom" and "Neutral" or "Moral Freedom".[1] Sidgwick pointed out that in Kant's treatment of the subject the word "freedom" is used in two distinct senses, both of which are quite legitimate, though Kant shows no consciousness of the difference between them. *Neutral* freedom is the freedom which all men equally possess (as implied in the moral imperative), and which is shown in bad actions just as much as in good actions: it is simply the capacity to choose between different courses of action, a capacity without which, we may say, a will would not be a will at all, and a man would not be a man. But when Kant proceeds to analyse freedom and to show how it is possible, he betrays that now he is using the word in a different sense and thinking of a different freedom—the freedom of rationality, exhibited only in good volitions, in which the will is moved by reason, free from the domination of passions and inclinations. This is *good* or *rational* freedom. Sidgwick points out incidentally that there is a third sense which is sometimes given to freedom of the will—that which he indicates by the term "Capricious Freedom". He is thinking of those "Libertarian" philosophers (including the Scottish Thomas Reid) who conceived of freedom as "the power of acting without a motive", and who tried to maintain its reality in that sense.

(*c*) A still more elaborate and comprehensive analysis, which in a manner covers these two distinctions and more, is made from a theological point of view in the ninth chapter of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* (1647). It begins by giving, as a general background, a statement of the freedom which man always possesses as man, and which continues through all his changing states—the state of innocence, the state of sin, the state of grace, and the state of glory. "God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined, to good

[1] In an article in *Mind*, reprinted as an Appendix to the 6th edition of Sidgwick's *The Methods of Ethics*.

or evil." That is the minimal kind of freedom which Luther and Calvin did not consider worthy of the name at all. To say that the will has this freedom is no more than saying that it is a will, and without it a man would not be a man.

Against that general background there are four stages. In the first, "the state of innocency" (sometimes called "original righteousness"), man "had freedom and power to will and to do that which is good and well pleasing to God; but yet mutably, so that he might fall from it." This is the freedom of *posse non peccare*, the initial stage (whether we conceive it in a historico-temporal or in a mythical and ideal way) in which man could choose either good or evil, and from which, though he actually fell, he *might not* have fallen.

The second stage gives us "the state of sin" (sometimes called "the state of nature"), in which man, now a fallen creature, is utterly unable to will what is good or to convert himself from evil. He is free only in the minimal sense of having a will. His will is not free in any substantial sense, but enslaved. That is the *servum arbitrium*.

The third stage is the state of grace. A man is now freed from his bondage, and can freely choose and will what is good, though he does not always do it, because there is still evil in him which can lead him astray. And in so far as he does overcome evil and choose good, it is not his own resources that enable him. It is the grace of God that enables him; not by compelling him, but by making him willing, so that he freely wills what is good. This is the highest freedom open to man on earth; and it is not the freedom of independence.

The fourth stage described in the chapter is the state of glory. "The will of man is made perfectly and immutably free to do good alone in the state of glory only." This is plainly identical with the *maxima libertas* of the *non posse peccare*, the inability to sin described by St. Augustine; and as here ascribed to redeemed man in the final beatitude of heaven, it is of course not regarded as man's achievement, but as something wrought in him by God.

III

I have indicated some of the well-known attempts that have been made to distinguish different senses or kinds or degrees of

freedom of the will, and it is difficult to relate them to each other; so that the total effect is perhaps one of extreme confusion. I am not able entirely to clear up the confusion of this endlessly difficult subject, but I wish now to suggest some simple truths which seem to emerge.

(1) The freedom of the human will does not mean sheer indetermination. In its minimal sense it means that man in his behaviour functions differently from lower organisms in that he functions by choosing, he acts by choice. Whether a man is good or bad, whether he does right or wrong, there is a sense in which he does it freely, at least in the case of a great many of his actions, all those which from the moral point of view can be regarded as the man's "acts". He acts freely in the sense that he does what he chooses to do. Someone will argue that the man chooses according to his nature, his character; and that, being such as he is, he could not choose differently. But if that is true, it does not make the man's action any less his own, or make him less responsible for it. For his nature, his character, is not something other than himself, compelling him from outside. His character is himself. That is what he is. So it is *he* that determines his actions.

It is quite misleading to speak of this position as "determinism", and the use of that word is a frequent source of confusion. The word is often used in such a way as to suggest that the determinist is perversely or sorrowfully denying something which would make life more significant if it could be affirmed, and that he is reducing the human will to a mechanical level, to the disadvantage of moral responsibility. Such determinism is absurd. But on the other hand we do not help matters by introducing the "capricious freedom", as Sidgwick called it, of "action without a motive". That is what would really be mechanical, for the action of a machine is indeed action without a "motive". And in the realm of will such "libertarianism" or "indeterminism" would seem to make human action, from the moral point of view, purely contingent, fortuitous, unconnected with the character of the agent, because unmotivated. That would be the very acme of irresponsibility. Surely we are responsible for our actions precisely because they do not spring "out of the blue", utterly undetermined and accidental, but spring from what we are, by a kind of determination quite

different from the chains of mechanical causation which determine the behaviour of material things; it is the determination of personal choice.

(2) It seems plain, though it sounds paradoxical, that this freedom of the will which we all possess does not necessarily carry with it the *ability* to do or be what we ought to do or be. There is a sense in which a man may be unable to will what he ought to will. It is difficult to get this point clear, and at first it seems contrary to common sense. Indeed a moralist may very well argue that if a man's will is bent in a wrong direction, only the man himself, by his own will, can put it right. Yet the situation is not so simple. How can the will put the will right? How could it put anything right unless it were already right itself? When the will is wrong, it does not *wish* to put itself right: that is what is wrong with it, since it is a will.

This becomes particularly plain when we remember the obvious principle that what matters morally is not simply the action or even the intention, but the motive and therefore the whole bent of the character. The divine imperative says to me: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. And yet I cannot *make* myself love my neighbour. It is impossible to evade this difficulty by saying with Kant that what is commanded is merely "practical love" in the sense of "beneficence for duty's sake". I ought, surely, not only to deal justly and kindly with my neighbour, but to *love* my neighbour; and if I do not, that is something of which I ought to be ashamed. And yet I cannot put it right by an act of will. If I am a selfish, loveless man, if I am self-centred (which is the root of all evil), how could I possibly draw myself out of my self-centredness and make myself love other people? The more I try to improve my character, the more am I concentrating on myself, and that is not a cure for self-centredness. Apparently I cannot cure it. And yet I know that it is blameworthy. I know that I am responsible for it, and that I ought to love my fellows though I cannot. Thus, though as a human being I have the minimal kind of freedom described above, there is a sense in which I am not free to do what I ought to do. There is moral obligation without "ability" to choose the good. That is why the theologians used to speak so much not only of freedom but of "ability" and "inability", and that is why they spoke of the *servum arbitrium*.

(3) Is it then true that in order to reach the genuine freedom we have to pass beyond morality? Is it possible that we cannot unravel this tangle of the problem of free will until we introduce the factor which theologians have intended when they have spoken of divine grace? "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"—that sums up the Christian ethic. But the central tradition of Christian theology has always taught that it is not in human nature, as we know it on earth, to obey that commandment. We cannot even begin to do it by an exercise of our own wills. We can only do it when grace comes to our aid. Now what does that mean? Is it only a piece of theological jargon or mystification? Or is it a profound and vital truth?

Every student of philosophy is familiar with what is called "the paradox of hedonism", the unquestionable fact that if one seeks pleasure as the *summum bonum*, one does not obtain it, that the quest of happiness defeats itself. But (as I have elsewhere pointed out) there is another paradox which is not so often noticed: what we may call "the paradox of moralism", the fact that the quest of *goodness* defeats itself. It is not precisely by trying to make ourselves into good men that we become good men. It is not by careful cultivation of our characters in the light of an ideal that the finest character is actually formed. That purely moralistic method is apt to lead either to manifest failure or, if it seems to be succeeding, to a self-righteous pride, which is really the worst failure of all. It is "Pharisaism". That is how the quest of goodness defeats itself.

The true saints have followed a different way. Instead of concentrating on their own characters, they have been God-centred. They have been less conscious of themselves than of God, less conscious of an ethic or an ideal than of the will of God, the love of God, which called out the response of their faith and love. Thus they have slowly and gradually come to love their neighbours in God. And, looking back, they have regularly confessed that whatever good was in their lives was not their own achievement but was due to divine grace. Not that this involved any cramping of their own personality, or destruction of their own freedom. Rather they would confess that never were they so truly free as in those moments when they were most wholly dependent on the grace of God. It

seems plain, then, that there is a quite luminous and practical truth underlying the mysterious statement that only by the aid of divine grace can a man be free to do and be what he ought to do and be. It means at least this, as a mere matter of psychological description: that the best kind of living, or the finest type of character, does not come through sheer volitional effort to realise an ideal, but in a more indirect way, as the fruit of a life of faith in God. And if the saints are right in their account of this, it means that we are not truly free except when we are depending on the grace of God.

These conceptions are indeed full of difficulties for the theologian as well as for the philosopher, and raise further questions which would lead us far beyond the scope of this article. I believe there is something fundamentally paradoxical about the mystery of the human will. But I think we have got so far as to be able to see through what is a common over-simplification of the whole matter. People often think of the moral life as if it were a case of man as a rational being, with a perfectly free will, confronted with moral choices from moment to moment, and always having the power to make the right choice, though he does not always do it. Thus they imagine that free will in itself is quite simple, and that contradictions arise only when we introduce the conception of the action of divine grace, which seems inconsistent with human freedom. But that is really a naïve and unrealistic falsification of the picture. Free will is not so simple. No doubt every will possesses "neutral freedom" in a sense which amounts to no more than saying that it is a will, and there is no contradiction between this freedom and the conception of divine grace properly understood as "a gracious personal relationship" (Oman). But there is a further freedom which, so far from being confused or contradicted by the conception of grace, cannot be explained without that conception. It appears to be true in a very plain and practical sense that a man is not really free to live as he ought to live until he passes beyond a self-contained morality into that relationship which the saints have described as dependence on the grace of God.

THE NEW BARTH[1]

Observations on Karl Barth's *Doctrine of Man*

by Professor EMIL BRUNNER

The sixth volume of the Basel theologian's monumental Dogmatics (*Church Dogmatics*, Vol. III, Part 2) is not only, like the earlier volumes, a significant work, but like the fifth, and even more than it a work full of surprises. I have no hesitation in associating myself with the judgment of my Danish colleague Prenter,[2] who calls it "the culmination so far of the whole powerful work". Barth devotes several pages of this volume to a notable discussion of my own anthropology, published fifteen years ago (*Man in Revolt*). In it he puts to me the question whether we mean the same thing or not (p. 155 ff.). There arises thus for me not merely the occasion but also the necessity of abandoning our mutual practice of not reviewing one another's works. The following pages are not intended to provide a survey of the whole work but only to bring out some specially important points. Naturally, then, they will be fully understood only by those who have some knowledge of both works. I have already given a brief affirmative reply to Barth's question in the second volume of my own *Dogmatics* (p. 95) after a hasty glance through his *Doctrine of Man* which came into my hands only after the completion of my own MS., but feel myself now obliged to state more precisely the reasons for this assent and to add some qualifications.

To begin with here is the impression left on me by the book as a whole: that the reader who previously thought he had some idea of what Barth taught and what he attacked, will pass from one surprise to another. Such readers as still remember Barth's *No! Answer to Emil Brunner*, whatever side they took in that controversy, will be more or less perplexed when faced by the new theses of Barth. Here are a few propositions chosen at random as a sample of them: "There is a human nature unaltered and unalterable even by sin" (p. 50), "a similarity be-

[1] Translated by Rev. John C. Campbell, B.D., Dunnottar Manse, Stonehaven.
[2] *Theologische Zeitschrift*, Basel, May 1950, p. 215.

tween the (divine) determination of man and his human nature which can be neither lost nor destroyed" (p. 245). The creature "is not changed into something else by the Fall" (p. 330). One should not be unduly concerned "lest too little credit be left to the grace of God, if so much is conceded to human nature" (p. 333). It is wrong "to think you can exalt the grace of God more highly by representing man as a page written as badly as can be or at best not at all". On the contrary, "we must assume some common humanity between Christian and non-Christian" (p. 336), and therefore "one ought not to stand up in the pulpit and denounce as downright bad what amid all evil is still one's own manhood" (p. 336). There is between Greek, pagan and Christian humanity "a common bond" (p. 341) and therefore "the witch-hunt against Greek culture noticeable in our theology for decades is no good thing" (p. 341).

Is it Karl Barth who wrote these things? Indeed it is: not however the Barth of 1934, but of 1948—the new Barth.

II

Do we now really mean the same thing? At least we have come a great deal closer to one another. I will now proceed to select some central points which we are together in maintaining and then I shall be able to put some questions of my own to Barth. Let us first bear common testimony to one thing: that we have both made a really honest effort to understand one another. In the case of Barth this is difficult not only on account of the colossal range of his work, not only owing to his often difficult style, but above all because he appears to be making so many contradictory statements. But as a matter of fact this is just the very impression that the development of my own thought seems to make on Barth (p. 153). Again and again it has occurred to me that you understand Barth best when you take him not so much as a systematic theologian but as one who has first one insight and then another which he puts into words as they come, without worrying whether they fit closely together in a system. Barth himself will surely not contest the fact that what stands in this sixth volume is in contradiction to much that was said in earlier volumes. For disciples who like to swear by the Master's doctrine this is rather inconvenient and it could easily happen to them to be

found invoking the Master in defence of positions which he himself had long ago abandoned. In Barth, however, this is a sign of spiritual vitality and ample freedom.

Here are the main points of doctrine common to both of us:

(1) As Christian anthropology the doctrine of man must take as its point of departure the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. (This is of course the case in every other Christian doctrine.)

(2) The main theme of this doctrine is that which deals with the image of God, knowable for us only in Jesus Christ and of the relation between this image and real man, i.e. man as he actually exists.

(3) Likeness to God is the nature of man as God's creature in relation to which sin stands in a contradiction which is incomprehensible but on no account inherent in that nature.

(4) In spite of sin creaturely being, the God-created nature of man, is not simply extinguished or annihilated, but concealed and obscured or—as I would prefer to say—perverted. This creaturely being appears in the constituent elements of human nature.

(5) Being in the image of God is to be understood as *analogia relationis*. (This expression derives from Barth, the concept however is already to be found as the basic idea of my own book *Man in Revolt*.)

(6) This human nature "surviving" in spite of sin is a *continuum* which is not to be denied or belittled as much as possible with a view to the greater glory of restoring grace.

(7) The I-Thou relationship which gives the formula for humanity is to be conceived as existence in the Word of God, Creator and Giver and likewise Lord of Life.

This is a very incomplete inventory of our points of agreement, but it may be taken to contain the most important elements. But as Barth in the course of his detailed interpretation of these theses finds occasion to put some questions to me so I in turn have some questions for him.

III

1. I fail to understand how Barth can be in doubt as to whether what I say about man as God's creature may not perhaps have the meaning of a mere potentiality and therefore

a neutrality as well. Surely the very title of my book *Man in Revolt*, i.e. man existing in a state of contradiction to his created being, says quite clearly the contrary. To my mind the position is the reverse for I cannot rid myself of the suspicion that "real man" which is the leading idea of the Barthian anthropology may mean something that is irreconcilable with the Christian doctrine of sin. This concept of "real man" is the particular crux of the reader attempting an interpretation.

One supposes one has grasped what is meant; real man is identical with the God-created, creaturely nature of man. So it is said that Jesus, as man according to the will of God, is "real man". "Real" here seems thus not to have its usual meaning but rather what we would express by the word "true man". So a little further on it is said that the sinner—and according to our usage that would be real man—is man who has "missed his reality" (p. 112). One can "let slip one's reality" (p. 225). One can "become beside oneself or one's reality" (p. 244). As sin is not creative it is merely a calling into question of real man, of "man's determination" (p. 246). Then elsewhere stress is laid on the fact that we are concerned with the "realistic portrait of real man", with the portrait of "man accepted of Christ, whom God is for, since the man Jesus is for him" (p. 317). But surely it is the sinner that God is "for", for the man we actually are as sinners. In this case real man cannot be man of God's good creation. In a later context, indeed, there crops up the concept of "real, natural man" (p. 337). Such statements are scattered here and there. At one moment real man is man who fulfils the purpose of God in creation. At another moment real man is man as he in fact exists, i.e. sinful man who as such does indeed not answer yes to God's determination.

I can best understand this curious concept of real man with the help of the comparison of "phenomena of human nature" as they appear to science, ethical idealism and to the existentialism of a man like Jaspers, which however, as Barth rightly says, do not penetrate the mystery of man. This part (pp. 82-157) is one of the clearest and most original of the whole work. It shows that Barth has seriously accepted all that is implied in discussion with current thought (what I used to call eristics) and has carried it out with care and astonishing breadth of mind. He does justice to them all—science, idealism, the exis-

tentialism of Jaspers. They all see something of man, in fact, "phenomena of human nature", but not man himself, real man. For they do not penetrate to the real mystery of man which indeed can only be known from revelation. Here perhaps is expressed the primary meaning of this otherwise ambiguous concept of "real man".

2. For anyone who could not share the hitherto negative attitude of Barth to all humanism one of the most surprising and welcome things in the book is surely the way in which the I-Thou relationships between God and man and between man and man are related to one another. Naturally I too rejoice at this assent to one of the leading ideas of my own anthropology. Between these two I-Thou relationships there exists, says Barth, an analogy, that is an *analogia relationis*. Very good. But when Barth goes on to stress repeatedly the fact that man has his *being* in this relationship, that it is an ontological determination that we are here concerned with, the conclusion, which Prenter too indicates in his review (op. cit., p. 221) becomes inevitable, that such being the case the *analogia relationis* becomes an *analogia entis*. Of course this does not mean the neo-platonic *analogia entis* which since Bonaventura has made its home in Roman Catholic theology, which I have always joined with Barth in refuting, but a different one. For all that the *analogia relationis* is indeed an *analogia entis*, just because it refers to man's *being*, is, as Barth himself says, an ontological determination. The arguments which Barth produces (p. 262) against this consequence are not sound. For an *analogia entis* too—even in the Roman Catholic sense—always has as its primary presupposition that God's being and man's being are unlike, as *esse a se* and *esse a deo* are unlike. It is an analogy between things basically different, namely between divine independent, and creaturely dependent, being.

3. The pleasant surprise provided by Barth's doctrine of humanity is as great. That human nature, humanity, consists in togetherness, that every anthropology that takes the solitary ego as its point of departure is fundamentally inhuman, these are all insights that came first from Ferdinand Ebner, secondly from Martin Buber and which Friederich Gogarten and myself as well have made familiar to theology. (Reasons why Feuerbach can hardly be seriously considered in this respect are set

forth by me in *Revelation and Reason*, p. 244.) Now that this doctrine of the essential togetherness of man has been taken up by Barth it will doubtless acquire greater cogency, and all the more so since he produces new aspects of it from the Bible. Starting from this point Barth arrives at a new positive valuation of the concept of human nature and this is the point at which as a matter of course will set in the resistance of those Lutherans who cannot break away from the negative formulations of Luther and the Lutheran Confessions.

As a matter of fact statements are made in this context which appear questionable even to me and to others who apart from that are only too pleased with Barth's new humanism. Certainly "the relation to God is a . . . necessary and constant determination of his nature", and "there can be no question of a concept of man in which the concept of God is not co-posited" (p. 84). The nature of man must be conceived as a nature "that stands fundamentally in some kind of relation (!) to God" (p. 83). For this reason, "the determination of man as God's creature is unambiguously and exclusively his determination to positive partnership" in the covenant of God and in no wise a neutral freedom of choice. When Barth asks me if this is my meaning too I can with good reason answer yes. But when he goes on to say that the fact that man participates in the grace of God is something primary that nothing subsequent (i.e. no sin) can alter (p. 238), although he has broken the covenant man cannot thereby annul it (p. 243), he can indeed sin but only within the covenant, and man remains even as sinner partaker of the grace of God—these are formulations that I cannot pass by without asking serious counter-questions. It is certainly legitimate to make such statements—not however from one's knowledge of creation but solely and alone from knowledge of reconciliation. What is to be said in the first place according to Scripture is surely just this: Sinful man has as such no longer any part in the covenant of grace; he is no longer within the covenant; he has fallen away from the covenant and only through the redeeming word and work of Christ, which is a different thing from the work of creation can he be "restored" again to participation in the covenant.

Is not this what has happened between 1934 and 1948, that then Barth in his preoccupation with saving grace ignored the

grace of creation, whilst now he seems to be inclined to identify saving grace and the grace of creation, to let the former be merged in the latter?

4. Closely allied to this is the doctrine of freedom and its relation to sin. Whilst the Reformers took over all the distinctions of Augustine which state that of God-created man we can predicate, *posse non peccare* but of perfect, redeemed man alone, *non posse peccare*, Barth boldly decrees that real man, i.e. God-created man possesses not only the *posse non peccare* but also the *non posse peccare* (p. 235). He cannot sin. Sin is, as we are repeatedly told, an "ontological impossibility". These words mean not only that sin is an incomprehensible monstrosity—as in fact it is—but that it is something that cannot happen. If it is an ontological impossibility then it cannot ever have been, cannot now be and never will be possible for sin to happen. That is the meaning of the concept of ontological impossibility and that is what Augustine says about the state of fully redeemed man. Even Barth, however, has to recognise that sin does happen, that it is the actual condition of us all. How is this "*power* to break the covenant", this "*power* to become beside one's reality" to be related to the *impossibility* of doing so? Are we to suppose that for Barth the solution lies in the idea that sin is not a reality at all but mere nothingness, a kind of non-being? Often in this volume and even more so in the latest—the seventh volume—we are reminded of this conception. But even so there remains the contradiction that at one time sin is called an ontological impossibility—it cannot happen, and on the other hand it has to be conceded that we are sinners, that the Fall could happen, that this incomprehensible monstrosity does happen.

Perhaps there is involved in this an ambiguous use of the word "determination" which enables us to pass over the existing contradiction as if it was not there. Of course, even when he sins, the sinner cannot lose his determination which is part of his created being. But then determination is something that stands in contradiction to reality. This is actually the thesis of my book and one for which I apparently incur Barth's disapproval. In Barth too one can read such statements as these: "Man determined by God for life with God" (p. 242); "Man understood in the light of that for which he was created" (p. 243). But opposed to all this are all these other statements

which obviously mean a great deal to Barth, such as that real man really does the will of God, really hearkens to His Word, really gives thanks to God and loves his neighbour (p. 208 ff.). Further this very man as part of creation is that *continuum* which cannot be annulled even by sin. Here I must declare the bankruptcy of my power to understand. Either "real man" means man whom Jesus Christ delivers, man that is who is not doing the will of God, or else this "real man" is not the man we in fact are.

5. This new way of envisaging man from the standpoint of creation leads to a further surprise. Barth now recognises a quality of humanity (*humanum*) that can be apprehended even by non-Christians, at least by the "wiser among the wise of this world" (p. 335). "It is possible that what we called the mystery of humanity might be realised and apprehended in some degree of perfection or imperfection even in quarters where there can be no question of direct perception and apprehension of Jesus Christ" (p. 332). In this matter of humanity we are concerned with "an object that has also been the object of secular wisdom, that is of a wisdom that is not grounded in Christian insights and principles" (p. 334). "One may also without any qualms rejoice to find oneself in a measure of agreement with the wise of this world" (p. 334). The Christian conception of humanity is "confirmed" by the Greek one (p. 342). Indeed "science and the Bible may together reach the same result" (p. 346). We find in fact a doctrine of the order of creation—in the shape of "a life that receives its character from this (human) nature". To know this "you do not need a special gift of the Holy Spirit to possess which one must be a Christian" (p. 332). This is not a matter of isolated statements but one of the really astounding new main theses of the great chapter on basic forms of humanity. Since this is to be taken seriously as a new line of thought, rising organically out of the new Barthian anthropology, let me take the liberty of asking a few questions on this subject:

(*a*) If there is this common ground between the knowledge of human nature among the wiser of the wise of this world and the Christian understanding of man, does there not arise from that the possibility of mutual discussion that previously seemed hopeless? Indeed has Barth himself not opened this discussion

in a felicitous way in that critical examination of the conception of man in science, idealism and existential philosophy? Is not this "common ground" just what I in my own terminology—which I will gladly surrender—called the "point of contact"?

(*b*) Granted then that amid all sinful corruption there remains that *continuum* deriving from God's work of creation and that even natural man may have some apprehension of this creaturely nature of his—although he does not recognise the Creator—does there not then exist a sphere within which Christian and non-Christian have something not only to hold but also to defend in common?

(*c*) Granted that natural man, at least the wiser among the wise of this world, can perceive something of man's God-created nature, ought there not to be such a thing as "natural law" as implied in the order of creation? Its foundation and ultimate meaning would of course be apprehended only by Christians, but its content by non-Christians also.

Barth has advanced here to a conception of human nature which was recognised by the Reformers also as a realm of knowledge shared with secular wisdom. It was this that obliged them to accept the conception of natural law as implied in such common insight, i.e. as meaning the protection of the humanity man has in virtue of his creation. There open up before us here perspectives giving us a prospect of overcoming opposing viewpoints in questions of the greatest actual moment, which are being discussed far beyond the bounds of theology. Of course these matters of common human interest are for us Christians an insight rooted and grounded in Christology. I have repeatedly emphasised the point that we Christians can only recognise a doctrine of the order of creation and a natural law when their foundation is laid in Christology. We can assent to Barth when he says that this apprehension of a quality of humanity (*humanum*) common to Christians and non-Christians needs to be safeguarded by Christology (p. 334). At the same time that would not prevent us from deriving from this knowledge some practical postulates which, in virtue of their practical content and not by the rational grounds given for them, could be recognised by non-Christians as well: e.g. postulates of international law which must of course be valid for non-Christian nations also.

(*c*) Our final question relates to what Barth no doubt regards as the cardinal point of his doctrine of man—its foundation in Christology. Since I too am resolved to recognise only an anthropology with a Christological foundation the more precise form of the question should be this: Is the way Barth sets about the Christological foundation and development of his anthropology the right way to do it? There is complete agreement between us on the point that the Word of God, that is Jesus Christ as the perfect Word of God, is the *ratio cognoscendi* of the creaturely nature of man. Difference of opinion begins only where Barth asks if for me Jesus Christ is only the *ratio cognoscendi* and not as for him the *ratio essendi*, the ground of the creaturely being of man. Let me first confess my incapacity to understand what is meant by saying that every man—including also such as lived a thousand years before Christ—has his being in the history of Jesus. "The history of human existence follows on the history of the man Jesus" (p. 194). I can only understand this by substituting for what is said another thought that appears also in Barth: that man is created in the pretemporal *Logos*, the eternal Word and purpose of God which was revealed and became historical reality in Jesus. The matter should then be expressed thus: that the creaturely nature of man has its ground and origin in an eternal pretemporal Word that in Jesus Christ became historical revelation. Without this regress to the pretemporal creative Word, these propositions quoted are meaningless to me. With the help of the regress, however, they become comprehensible and, to my mind, correct. I understand them in the light of the main thesis of Barth's doctrine of creation, which is in substance also mine, that God's covenant is the inner ground of creation (cf. my *Dogmatics*, II, 5). From this standpoint one can understand that "real man"—I would rather say "true man"—is Jesus Christ the fulfilment of God's purpose in creation.

This however does not seem to exhaust Barth's meaning which includes something different as well. It is this, that every man as such partakes in the grace of Jesus Christ, not, as you might suppose, through faith, but in virtue of his creation, by being born man. As man he is "a member in the Body of the Head" (p. 174). Not the believer, not whosoever is born again through faith by a second Word and work of God, the Atone-

ment—no! independently of faith every person is a member in the Body of the Head. This is simply to say that the work of creation and the work of redemption, the covenant of creation and the covenant of grace are identical. Only so does it become possible to venture the proposition that everyone in virtue of his creation participates in the covenant God has made with us in the Redeemer, Jesus Christ. That would mean in addition that everyone, including the godless man, the unbeliever and the unrepentant sinner, just because he is a human being, has a part in God's redemptive purpose, is indeed within this covenant and cannot fall from it, not even through sin. Because these two things are revealed in Jesus Christ—the divine purpose in creation and the saving will of God for the redemptoin of sinners—the Christological doctrine of creation is so conceived as to imply that just as every man is called into being through the creative purpose of God so he is as irrevocably made thereby a participator in God's atonement and redemption.

Admittedly it is for me still an open question whether Barth really means this. For, as we have already pointed out, expressions about sharing *in* the covenant alternate with those about determination *to* the covenant. But we have likewise seen that Barth makes a point of refusing to distinguish between determination and its actual fulfilment, and indeed reproaches me for making this distinction. "Real man" according to this view is not simply man into whose life the call of God has come, but man actually responding to it in obedience. Is this perhaps the reason why sin is called the ontological impossibility, something, that is to say, not only contrary to man's determination but in fact impossible? "In sin man apprehends something that is made impossible for him and against which he is protected" (p. 176), protected indeed by the fact that all the time he has participated, not only in the creating Word of Jesus, but also in His redeeming Word of Salvation.

According to my understanding of the New Testament something totally different is there said to us. It is that everyone as the creature of God is only to be understood in the light of the creating Word of God revealed to us in Jesus Christ, i.e. through Jesus Christ as *ratio cognoscendi*. Through sin, however, participation in the covenant of God has been lost and become forfeit and can only be *restored* through the second Word of God, the

Word of Atonement *in so far as a man believes*. The identification of creating Word and atoning Word makes every man—believer and unbeliever alike—members of the Body of Christ—an expression which in the New Testament is unambiguously reserved for the Church, the communion of the faithful. In such a case to be sure Christ would be the "real ground" of the creaturely existence of every man and sin would indeed be a non-existent which could make no difference to participation in the covenant. Restoring grace then which according to the New Testament is given only to the believer is the same as the grace of creation and therefore belongs to every creature.

I would not venture to set this forth as Barth's doctrine or even as an aspect of it were it not that the wording of so many passages tends in this direction and that many things, otherwise incomprehensible, become in this way clear at once. Above all this argument resumes a line of thought from the doctrine of election (*Church Dogmatics*, II, 2) to the effect that in Christ all men, believers or unbelievers, are elected and *cannot* be lost. This doctrine that even at that stage occasioned some misgivings is now developed to a point which makes us look at it even more askance. In brief, because every man in virtue of his creation is in Christ, everyone has therefore a share in the redemption whether he believes or not, everyone is "a member in the Body of the Head". Because the grace of creation and of redemption are identical the doctrine of the state is to be derived from the doctrine of the Church (Christian community and civil community) and one can also provide a basis for (secular) law from the standpoint of the justification of the sinner (justification and law).

Such then seems to be the hidden unity of Barthian thought. And yet I do not venture to say: This is what Barth means; I can only ask: Is this really what he means? I cannot rightly believe that this is how he wishes it to be understood. For then the work of Atonement would no longer be a work, the call to repentance would become superfluous and the decision of faith cease to be a decision.

Karl Barth will therefore understand that to his question whether by God-created man I mean "real man", whether Jesus Christ is not merely the epistemological principle but also the constitutive principle of human existence, I cannot answer

with a plain and simple yes. If what is meant is the identification of the grace of creation with the grace of redemption, in other words that in virtue of one's creation one is also a redeemed man—I could only answer no.

But before I for my part say no, I would like to see clearly what Barth means. There is so much in this book to which I can only assent from the bottom of my heart, so much that I have hailed with an "at last!", that I fear nothing more than to destroy by a fresh misunderstanding the unity so laboriously achieved. For all the questions which the reading of this book raises urgently for me—and for many another besides, take not a jot away from our gratitude for the fulness of insights which are offered here, some wholly new, others with new power and profundity. Whatever may be said about this volume, there is one thing no one can leave unsaid: It is of all Barth's works his most human.

THE JUDGMENT OF GOD[1]

by The Rev. Professor W. ROBINSON

That the Judgment of God is a Biblical notion of profound significance cannot be denied. But it has never been popular with man, and in some ages of the Church's history—apart from the Liturgy[2]—it has been entirely dormant. In a recent article in *The Congregational Quarterly*[3] Dr Lovell Cocks describes the Edwardian Nonconformist minister as one "who endeared himself to his congregation as a big, brotherly fellow by having 'no use for theology' "—a very true description of more than *Nonconformist* ministers in that age of prosperity—and then says that the same man to-day would "merely write himself down as a charlatan or an ass". I wonder how true this is! Have we really so completely left behind that Edwardian optimism? I doubt it. The heritage of the second half of the nineteenth century, the age of progress and expansion, is perhaps not so easily got rid of as that. Whilst it is true that amongst theologians in the past thirty years there has been a revival of the notions of the Holiness of God, the Judgment of God, and of eschatological matters in general; and whilst Barth and Brunner and Niebuhr are names to conjure with, I am inclined to think that the general run of men and women, including many preachers, are still prone to cling to the comfortable and somewhat sentimental doctrines of the Love of God which were fashionable amongst theologians a generation ago. Let us first examine the background of the easy-going, optimistic theology of the Edwardian age in order to understand it better. I will mention two things only.

I

The great influence which created it was undoubtedly the

[1] Paper read at the Sheffield Theological Society.

[2] Liturgy is always less liable to change than theology, even where a Church has no fixed Liturgy except hymns and metrical psalms. Here the conservatism is shown in selection, and it is often surprising that in an age or place where theology is barren, Liturgy in the form of hymns and prayers (even extempore prayers) will reflect the full Gospel.

[3] July 1948, "The Message of P. T. Forsyth".

Ritschlian theology,[1] which was most pervasive, and still is, in spite of world collapse. Ritschl was not only a child of his day, but a creator of new thought forms and attitudes. Even the *Lux Mundi* school, headed by the young Charles Gore, was pervaded by Ritschlian thought. His theology was not all bad. He reacted violently against the psychologism and subjectivism of Schleiermacher in rehabilitating the objectivity of history and of the historic Church. But his theology was conditioned by the assumption that the Synoptic Gospels, as over against the Pauline Epistles, contained the real essence of the *simple* Gospel of Love and Forgiveness, and was defective on the doctrines of the Person of Christ, the Atonement, Justification, and other Pauline elements. The relationship between the Holy God and man required no Atonement. Justification was simply *forgiveness* to be received in humble faith, followed by *reconciliation*. Moreover, even so far as the Synoptic Gospels were concerned, there was a sifting—something quite *a priori* and subjective—and the eschatological elements of our Lord's teaching, such as those found in Mark 13 and Matthew 24 and 25, were either neglected or rejected as not being the authentic teaching of Jesus. They belonged to the ecclesiastical millinery of the time.

This was all strengthened by the work of von Harnack towards the end of the nineteenth century, especially after the translation of his book into English under the title, *What is Christianity?*[2] His influence was tremendous. According to von Harnack the essence of Christianity was simply, (1) the Kingdom of God conceived of as social righteousness, (2) faith in God, (3) the higher righteousness of Love. This was eternal life in time by strength under the eyes of God. All this found an echo in the hearts of many and was most attractive, especially down to 1914. To none was it more attractive than to those who boasted that they "had no use for theology" and were obsessed by the *simple* Gospel. In its extreme form it expressed itself in the half-baked theology and immanentist philosophy (a kind of undigested Spinozism) of R. J. Campbell of City

[1] In its Harnackian form. It took a different form in the theology of Wilhelm Herrmann of Marburg, but his influence in this country was slight as compared with that of Harnack.

[2] The substance of sixteen lectures delivered to students of all faculties in the University of Berlin, 1899-1900, produced in fairly non-technical language, translated from the German into English and published in 1901.

Temple fame. I remember as a boy how strongly entrenched all this was, even amongst Primitive Methodist local preachers. It was such a comfortable religion and it accorded so much with the age.

Even in the day of its origin this reduced Christianity was challenged by scholars, some of them equally as great as Ritschl and von Harnack. Johannes Weiss had shown how false was this picture of Primitive Christianity extracted from the Synoptic Gospels. Harnack had "created a past which never was a present". Schweitzer followed and showed beyond doubt that the Jesus of History, extracted arbitrarily from the Synoptic Gospels by rejecting all teaching about Judgment and Last Things, was a creation of fiction. Harnack and his followers had looked down a deep well, seen *themselves* reflected and said, "Jesus!"[1] No such simplicity as this "simple Gospel" had been known to the first age of Christians. There was Kähler in Germany, contemporary with Harnack, though practically unheard of and unknown in our own country, with a much more constructive Gospel. In the very hey-day of Harnack's comfortable doctrine, when it could be heard from almost every pulpit in this land, in the first decade of this century, James Denney in Scotland, and P. T. Forsyth—a Scotsman strayed over the border—in England, standing almost alone amongst the theologians of the day, were making prophetic utterances of truths which were yet to be validated by the scholarship of the next thirty years.[2] A similar work was being done in Germany by Karl Heim, but it is only now after the thunderings of Barth that men are coming to discover the work and worth of these prophets.

Forsyth claimed that preaching had degenerated into the utterance of "happy thought, fancies, or philosophies of the preacher, with the text as a motto. . . . The preacher needed to be protected against preaching himself".[3] The thought of many

[1] See his exhaustive study published in English in 1910 under the title, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus.*

[2] It is instructive to re-read in our day Denney's *Studies in Theology*, delivered as lectures in Chicago University, 1894, and published 1895. Forsyth's main works range from 1905-1918 and are just now being republished by the Independent Press, but as far back as 1902 there was published an essay of his in a symposium, *The Atonement in Modern Religious Thought*, which is all the more illuminating seeing it lies side by side with one from R. J. Campbell!

[3] See *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind*, p. 8.

Christians, especially Nonconformist Christians, had degenerated into a vague Humanism plus the Hegelian metaphysic. The Gospel of Love was preached, but it was Love without costingness. The Good News that man was a *sinner* was almost unheard. Henry Drummond, great as his work was, had a most defective doctrine of sin and of the Holiness of God. In those ten years, as ethical consciousness sharpened, the sense of sin diminished. Even of ethical consciousness, standing on its own feet, we may doubt, in face of the moral collapse which followed in the next thirty years, whether it was any deeper than the ethics of the old woman who stole herrings and said, "God forgive us our sins as we commit 'em". As Forsyth said, "Calvin was swept out of doors overnight and a Hegelian suite of furniture taken in in the morning".[1] Men had turned away from a theology too hard to a theosophy too soft. It was easier to think of the freedom of man than of the freedom of God; easier to think of human happiness than of Divine Glory. Men of the day failed to see what Calvin had so persistently taught, that man's freedom was never so tenuously held as when we lose sight of the Sovereignty of God. The proper study of man is not mankind, but God; the supreme subject of existence for man is not man himself, but God.[2] Man had turned inward on himself, and when the only spiritual world for man is that within himself, instead of that which he really is when faced with God, the world is lost to man and he himself is lost. Forsyth clearly stated that the end of that kind of freedom was tyranny, and he stated it in a day when nothing looked like it. It did not require two world wars, nor even one, to teach Forsyth this truth, as it did at least one to teach Barth, Brunner and Niebuhr. He learnt it from the Word of God, and how right he was, and how true it is, we have learnt to our cost. Where now is this boasted freedom of the first decade of the century?

The war of 1914-18 came as a shock to most of the world, but no sooner was it over than there was a partial recovery of

[1] *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind*, p. 143.

[2] It was in this existential way that Forsyth had begun to think, not of God as the Supreme Object *observed* by man, but as the Supreme Subject *encountered* by man, who by the encounter was challenged in the dialogue of Word and Action. So faith was decision and committal. See *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind*, 1907, and *The Justification of God*, 1917.

nerve. In the shallowest manner possible we talked of *reconstruction*, that is of building on the same foundations and of building a world "fit for heroes to live in". We were keen enough on exercising judgment on those who had sinned, forgetting that we, too, were sinners, whilst we still looked askance at the Judgment of God and failed to recognise it in the events of our time. Meanwhile the secular Humanists of the day, who had no faith in God, began the preaching of utter disillusionment, defeatism and pessimism. Such were Bertrand Russell, R. W. Krutch, Aldous Huxley, Middleton Murry, T. S. Eliot and Walter Lippmann. In the period between the wars this pessimistic Humanism was everywhere, in drama, novel, essay, film and newspaper, and eventually in politics. It was a faith or un-faith suited to morbid minds. It is well expressed in the following sonnet by the American poet, Herman Hagedorn:

> Like a young child who to his mother's door
> Runs eager for the welcoming embrace,
> And finds the door shut, and with troubled face
> Calls and through sobbing calls, and o'er and o'er
> Calling, storms at the panel—so before
> A door that will not open, sick and numb,
> I listen for a word that will not come,
> And know, at last, I may not enter more.
>
> Silence! And through the silence and the dark
> By that closed door, the distant sob of tears
> Beats on my spirit, as on fairy shores
> The spectral sea; and through the sobbing—hark!
> Down the fair-chambered corridor of years,
> The quiet shutting, one by one, of doors.[1]

Some of these secular Humanists later found their refuge in the Christian Church, such as Eliot, Murry and Lippmann. Nevertheless, the pervasive optimistic Humanism of the first decade of the century, the influence of Ritschl and Harnack, still lives on in spite of two world wars and the threatened collapse of civilisation. Recently two examples of it have been given, in the issue of Bishop Barnes' infamous book *The Rise of Christianity* and in the editing of an ancient text by Dr. O'Sullivan, a Roman Catholic scholar and an Irishman! Salvian, who was a contemporary of St. Augustine, wrote a treatise in the fifth century (a time not unlike our own in many respects)

[1] *The Book of American Poetry*, ed. by Edwin Markham, p. 622. Hagedorn was born in 1882.

entitled *On The Present Judgment*. Later generations in the Middle Ages softened the title to *The Governance of God*, but in our day Dr O'Sullivan, in editing the text, has achieved the up-to-date title of *A Report on the State of the Nation*! This is only a straw, but it shows which way the wind blows. I would even go so far as to say that it shows the progressive deterioration we have suffered since the middle of the nineteenth century, which unfits our minds for understanding the Biblical categories, especially the category of the Judgment of God. We are not "within the understanding distance".

II

The second factor in our make-up which blinds us to seeing and understanding the Biblical categories is related to the different understanding of the relationship of Time to Eternity in the Hebrew mind and in the Greek mind. As belonging to Western civilisation we inherit both ways of thought. They have lain together in a kind of amalgam and generally we have failed to realise that there was no real unity. It is at this point, almost more than at any other, that the Bible and Greek thought are miles apart. In the first place, God to the Greek was *impersonal*. For Aristotle He was "the unmoved Mover" engaged in "immobile activity"; for the Jew He was the *living* God. He was Creator and man was *creature*, and God was related to His creation, especially to man, as personal will. This meant, amongst other things, a *moral* God and an *active* God, active within time, known to man, not by speculation, but because He had revealed Himself *in history*. It followed, in the second place, that God for the Greek was known as *observed*, like any other object, the supreme object of man's contemplation and speculation. For the Jew God was known *existentially*, within existence: He was *encountered*. The relationship between God and man was an "I and Thou" relationship, not an "I and It" relationship. God speaks and we answer: God acts and we are judged and redeemed. Thus God is known *in* history from beyond history. This makes the difference between a God who *reveals* Himself, taking the initiative, and a God who is incapable of doing so but can only be postulated by the mind of man. Further, it leaves inviolable the transcendence of God, while avoiding the immanence and relativity of human thought.

Thirdly, for Greek thought the time process was evanescent, and in a sense evil. History was little more than the sport of the gods—a tragedy indeed with some comedy mixed—but *sport* and little more. Eternity was the negation of time and time the negation of eternity.[1] For the Jew history was God's workshop: it was shot through with *purpose*—Divine purpose. It might look like confused purpose and often more like disorder than order; but the sublime faith was held that if it seemed like disorder, it was "ordered disorder", if it seemed confused, that was only an appearance and at bottom it had *moral* fibre: "Be sure your sins will find you out." If the mills of God ground slowly, they ground exceeding sure. In history there was tragedy, but the tragedy was not *defeat*, not nemesis; and history was not sport, but the making of reality. History was the instrument of God for the working out of His purpose. Lastly, the Greek was concerned with *speculation*, the Jew with *witness*. That is why the Bible is not a book of metaphysics, in the strict sense of the term: it is in the main a book about history. It declares that within history there is "holy history" or "salvation history", certain events which are the acts of God in history, which are not only events in history, but which have significance for eternity. In other words, they are historical-eschatological events. Thus, time and eternity are not exactly opposites: time has meaning for eternity and eternity fulfils itself in time. God is in history, not only horizontally, but vertically. In the revelation of Himself to man, what might be called "eternal nows" are struck down into time. That is why for the Jew and the Christian particular facts of history can establish eternal truth. For the Greek-minded in every age this is a scandal, "the scandal of particularity" as Kierkegaard called it. Much of this has become obscure to us because of our heritage in the classical world of Greek culture.

We shall have to rid ourselves of these two "blinkers"—that of Ritschlian theology as interpreted through Harnack with its consequent optimistic humanism, and that of the Greek understanding of time and eternity—if we would see clearly what the Bible has to say on the Judgment of God.

[1] This is less true of Plato—though not of Neo-Platonism—than of Aristotle. It is still less true of the Tragedians, though it must not be forgotten that for them the eschatological event was no more than Nemesis; tragedy and defeat were inseparable. It is, however, true of the general attitude of the Greek mind.

III

When we turn to the Biblical record with these warnings in mind, we see that the Bible is concerned with the Holiness of God—utter holiness—and with man as a sinner, though he is made in the image of God, or, more truly, a sinner *because*[1] he is made in the image of God. There is an essential dialectic in the Biblical understanding of God and man. In God there is the dialectic of Holiness and Love, of Judgment and Mercy. To emphasise the Love of God and to neglect Holiness, to speak of His Mercy and to neglect Judgment, as Ritschlian theology tended to do and as Edwardian sentimentalism certainly did do, is false to the whole Biblical conception of God, not only that of the Old Testament, but that of the New Testament. In the same way, the Biblical view of man recognises the essential dialectic of man as sinner and as made in the image of God. To water sin down to waywardness, shortcomings, misdeeds and such like, is false to the total Biblical view of man. So is the exaltation of man fostered by Positivism and secular Humanism which was put forward as an up-to-date theology in the early years of this century, and which has an anachronistic survival in our own day.[2] Man has nobility, of course, for God has called him to fellowship with Himself. It is, therefore, a God-given nobility and not a self-made nobility. In the Bible *humanitas* and *humilitas* are always together.[3] This essential dialectic in man means that man cannot save himself and yet he can only be saved as a *responsible* creature. True, he

[1] I use the word "because" in a provocative sense. God was never so absolute as when He created freedom, which He did when He created man in His own image.

[2] All this was based on the idea that the difference between God and man was one of degree only and not the difference between Creator and created. "We are no partners with God, fellow-workers though we be," said Forsyth and warned us that education and development in themselves were no Gospel for man: "Merely develop sinful man, and in spite of all the good in him, you only have a greater sinner" (*Positive Preaching*, p. 55). This was in 1907, and how true his words have proved to be!

[3] This is the essence of the Biblical doctrine of election, God's call and choice without which there can be no salvation for man. This invasion is, however, no assault on the sanctuary of personal freedom, for it comes from the only One who can give us to ourselves and can grant us real moral freedom. As Calvin pointed out, *man* can have no freedom apart from the Sovereignty of God, for God's Sovereignty is never so Sovereign as when He creates freedom. St. Augustine pointed out a radical difference between the two choices of evil and of good. The choice of evil is the denial of freedom, while to choose the good is to be free; and this means that we are never so really *human* as when we submit ourselves to the Will of God.

is under the mercy of God, but he is also under the Judgment of God; and mercy without judgment would be man's worst medicine. A love which knew nothing of wrath—the wrath against sin—would be utterly demoralising and would prove to be man's total ruin.

All this in the Bible moves to a climax in Jesus Christ, who in His own Person solves the inner dialectic between God and Man. He is the God-Man. He not only brings the Good News, but He Himself *is* the Good News which He brings. This was the Gospel which St. Paul preached, declaring that there was no other Gospel and that anyone who preached another was to be anathematised. This he declared before any of our Gospels were written down. What other Gospel was there? The New Testament criticism of the last twenty-five years has made it clear that there was none other, and has shown how shallow was the criticism of a generation or so ago, which imagined that in the Synoptic Gospels there was a kind of good-natured "simple Gospel" altogether different from that of St. Paul.[1] The Synoptic Gospels, when properly studied, make this point clear, and the Fourth Gospel, it will hardly be denied by any, gathers the ideas of redemption and judgment—both—around the Lord Jesus. Jesus not only announced the Kingdom of Righteousness (Holiness) and Love, but He Himself *was* the Kingdom. Again, the Kingdom had its own dialectic; in our Lord's day it *had already come*, and yet it was *still to come*. It was something *in* history, and yet its consummation was *beyond* history. It was something "not of this world", and yet it had to do with this world; it belonged to the eternal, and yet it had infravalent ends here and now.

Over against the order of the Kingdom stands the World order. This also has a dual nature. There is in it an element of righteousness, of law and order, of justice and morality; but there is also a demonic element, a principle working against its own health, because working against God who is Creator of the World order. In the pursuit of power the World works its own mischief and its own ruin. In this sphere *we* work and

[1] See Martin Dibelius, *Gospel Criticism and Christology*; R. Bultmann, *Jesus and the Word*; C. H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments*; W. L. Knox, *St. Paul and the Jerusalem Church*; and especially the very full study of the question in W. Manson, *Jesus the Messiah*. Further light is thrown on this problem by the most recent study of W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*.

God works, visiting it and visiting us with His Judgment and His Mercy. There is a sphere of God's non-personal working in the world, and there is a sphere of His personal working. It is this latter sphere with which the Bible is mainly concerned, though not entirely. The central part of the Bible, *Heilsgeschichte*, is concerned with God's personal working. He visits us with His redemption, which is both Judgment and Mercy. In working in history *we* are constantly faced with the dilemmas which the relativities of history create. Often, with the best will in the world, we have to face the choice, not between an absolute good and an absolute evil, but between two evils, one of which is relatively good. Thus, we are constantly beset with the temptation to do evil that good may come. Often the good which we seek turns out to be a worse evil than the evil overcome. We are slow to learn that only God can bring good out of evil by His redemptive power. The very fact that we exist in time—in history—means that many of our choices are conditioned by *inevitable* compromise, which we cannot escape. All choices are not of this kind, but such choices form part of our historical existence. That is why it is that man, *qua* man, cannot build the Kingdom of God on earth. It was the essence of the optimistic Gospel preached in the first decade of this century that man could so build the Kingdom of God.[1] Now we know to our sorrow that the end of such building is Babel.

For this reason the Christian, whilst he believes in progress, that blessed word of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, does not believe in straight-line progress. Of course he believes in the ultimate victory of God, of good over evil, but he knows that this is not a progress from better to best and that it does not mean, as nineteenth century thinkers proclaimed, *inevitable* progress. The process is much more apocalyptic than that. There is no universal escalator by which man, willy nilly, is translated to higher regions of culture and civilisation. History moves much more catastrophically than that. There is no smooth running. Rather there is *crisis*—a word definitely connected with Judgment—by which the tensions of history are resolved. Again and again the Judgments of God descend upon the futilities of our human effort and sin. Again

[1] This was the theme of Herbert Spencer's *Principles of Ethics*, which was taken up and re-echoed in a supposedly Christian form from the pulpits of the land.

and again the leaven of God's Righteousness works within history, until by the Mercy of God the leaven explodes and a purely relative situation is transcended, so that an ethical question which was once relevant becomes purely academic and irrelevant *in the life situation.*[1]

On the other hand, over and over again we, who by the grace of God have been granted this freedom, circumvent, though we do not frustrate, the working of God in history. Time and again we refuse to enter doors which He has opened wide; and more often, perhaps, we spend our time attempting to batter down doors which it is not the will of God should be opened at that precise time. We are ever willing, in our perversity, to attempt to force the hand of God.[2] Thus, as John Oman said, God takes the way of the river and not of the canal.[3] Often "His ways are past finding out".

According to the Bible the Judgment of God is received here and now as well as hereafter. Every encounter with God, the Holy God, is a Judgment, not less the final encounter of death. But this Judgment is Mercy to the faithful if they will receive it and not rebel against it. Our goal is on in front, in the eternal; and yet, already we have eternity in time. Already we possess the *arrhabon*[4]—the first fruits of that which is to be. Surrounded by the misery and suffering, the futility and frustration of life, like all other earth-born creatures and like them sharing in it, we yet know ourselves to be possessed of another order of life. We know this because the end of history has already appeared in the midst of history—the *eschaton*—in the world-shattering and world-redeeming events of the life, death, resurrection, and exaltation to the Throne of Judgment of Jesus Christ. It is in that crisis that our hope lies, that within history One has appeared who could say, "The Prince of this World

[1] An example of this kind of thing is seen in the abolition of the slave trade and later of slavery in the British Empire in the early years of the nineteenth century. Before the abolition of slavery it was a relevant ethical question to discuss whether a Christian could be a slave-owner; in fact it was a very live question and one hotly debated. After the abolition, and very speedily after, it was a purely academic question.

[2] An example of trying to force the hand of God may be seen in the attempt in 516 B.C. to set up the Messianic Kingdom after the return from the Exile, reflected in Haggai and Zechariah 1-8.

[3] This is a common metaphor used throughout Oman's *Grace and Personality.*

[4] An untranslatable Hebrew word which St. Paul transliterates into Greek to express the foretaste of the glory hereafter which Christians already possess through the Spirit. See 2 Cor. 1.22; 5.5; Eph. 1.14.

cometh and findeth nothing in me". But, if this is so, we must be ready to be chastened by the Judgment of the Holy God as well as visited by His Mercy.

Judge eternal, throned in splendour,
Lord of lords and King of kings,
With Thy living fire of judgment
Purge this realm of bitter things;
Solace all its wide dominion
With the healing of Thy wings.

Still the weary folk are pining
For the hour that brings release,
And the city's crowded clangour,
Cries aloud for sin to cease,
And the homesteads and the woodlands
Plead in silence for their peace.

Crown, O God, Thine own endeavour,
Cleave our darkness with Thy sword;
Feed the faint and hungry heathen
With the richness of Thy Word,
Cleanse the body of this empire
Through the glory of the Lord.[1]

[1] Henry Scott Holland, 1847-1918, from *The English Hymnal* (Oxford University Press).

P. T. FORSYTH: THE PROPHET OF JUDGMENT

by The Rev. A. F. SIMPSON

In the recent revival of interest in the teaching of Dr P. T. Forsyth as "The Theologian of the Cross", due attention has scarcely been given to the many implications of his message among which his doctrine of Judgment occupies so prominent a place. Indeed, one can say that it is impossible to grasp his doctrine of Redemption apart from the persistent stress he lays, in practically all his works, on Judgment. It was his contention, against the Liberal Christian theology of his day, with its emphasis on the latent divinity of man and the benevolence to the neglect of the severity of God, that it tended to produce *pulpiteers* rather than *preachers* and a soft rather than a stalwart faith. He drew a hard and fast line between the orator and the preacher. "Preaching", he declares, "is the most distinctive institution in Christianity. It is quite different from oratory. The pulpit is another place, and another kind of place, from the platform. Many succeed in the one and yet are failures in the other. The Christian preacher is not the successor of the Greek orator, but of the Hebrew prophet."[1] The Hebrew prophet with his "Thus saith the Lord" was invariably the prophet of judgment. When God speaks He speaks as Judge, and the prophet, speaking in His name, claims the right to pronounce judgment. So with Jeremiah, Amos and Hosea. John the Baptist was the herald of judgment, and our Lord, while he cautioned people against judging one another, considering their own faults, exercised the right equally with his heavenly Father to determine the merit and demerit of men. "For judgment", He said, "I am come into this world."[2] Anyone who claims to speak in the name of God must, in a measure, proclaim the judgment of God—His judgment of both good and evil. In so far as there must be a clear line drawn between the righteous and the wicked, the true preacher can scarcely avoid the note of judgment. Indeed, he dare not, for His Gospel lays upon him this responsibility.

[1] *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind*, p. 1. [2] John 9.39.

In several passages Forsyth stresses the point that the Christian preacher is not like the lecturer who chooses his own subject and speaks to it. The preacher has his subject given him and is carried along by it. The Gospel is not something he creates, but

> The Bible, the preacher and the Church are all made by the same thing—the Gospel. The Gospel was there before the Bible, and it created the Bible, as it creates the true preacher and the true sermon everywhere. And it is for the sake and service of the Gospel that both Bible and Preacher exist.[1]

In the same strain he affirms:

> With preaching Christianity stands or falls, because it is the declaration of a Gospel. Nay more—far more—it is the Gospel prolonging and declaring itself.[2]

Thus the minister is neither the mouthpiece of the Church nor its chairman. He is the mouthpiece of the Gospel, the servant of the Word and not of the Church.[3] From this it follows that the true preacher will never be concerned with airing his own views. He will be concerned only with the Gospel of God which he is commissioned to proclaim; and inasmuch as the Gospel is, to a large extent, judgment on sin, the preacher must be a prophet of judgment or forfeit his right to the Christian pulpit.

But a judge must speak with authority; else he is no judge. And if the preacher does not carry with him the conviction of the Gospel he proclaims, his word will be of no avail. Dr Forsyth reminds us that the authority of the preacher was once supreme. "He bearded kings and bent senators to his word. He determined policies, ruled fashions and prescribed thought. And yet he has proved unable to maintain the position he was so able to take."[4] Not that Forsyth advocates a return to these old authoritarian days when respect for the pulpit was so mixed up with superstition and fear; but what he would emphasise is that the pulpit has an authority all its own and must exercise that authority. If it have not such authority, "it is but a chair and not a pulpit; it may discourse, but it does not preach". The authority, he goes on to explain, is not that of the preacher's person, nor is the preacher's authority even the authority of his truth, as mere truth is intellectual, and authority is a moral

[1] *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind*, p. 10.
[2] ibid., p. 3. [3] *The Church and the Sacraments*, p. 123.
[4] *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind*, p. 28.

idea bearing not upon belief only but upon will and faith, decision and personal surrender. The personal authority of the pulpit is the authority of the Divine Person who inspires it, "the living, saving God before whose visitation the prophet fades like an ebbing voice".[1] If the Church is to come to her own again the pulpit must reiterate the voice of God which is the voice of judgment.

It was no small service Dr Forsyth rendered the Church of the early twentieth century when, with his characteristic passion, he cried: "Replace the Great White Throne in our spiritual sky." In the end and at the long last all men must bow before the throne of God. The throne is also the great judgment seat. It is indeed difficult to see how the Evangelical faith and with it any effective Christianity could possibly survive if men lost their sense of the obedience due a holy God who is their Judge as well as King. It is this sense of trust and obedience that is the soul of prayer and without prayer religion is but a convention. Is it not the case that prayer depends on the belief that, not only have we a Divine helper, but we also continually stand before the Examiner of our lives? There is no hiding the fact that the pulpit would generate a new power and the Church gain in health and vigour if, instead of interesting talks on pleasing themes, more or less religious, the message of Judgment not only at the long last but now and always was the burden of the preacher's theme. For, as Forsyth is always insisting, what matters is not what we say or think about God; it is what He says to us and commands us to do. The Christian religious relationship must always be in the nature of a response to a Divine imperative. When the Holy speaks, we are under judgment.

Forsyth's importance, in this respect, lies, to a great extent (1) in his recovery of the doctrine of Judgment as an integral part of the Gospel message, and (2) in his rescue of the conception from a popular chiliasm according to which the Judgment was regarded as a future event with little relevance to the present "now". But apart from Millenarian views in their various forms the tendency still is to relegate the judgment to the time of death or to some remote future, thus dimming the belief that God has a very present interest in human affairs.

[1] ibid., p. 30.

The practice of the presence of God, so essential to a fervent devotional life, would seem to depend on the certain faith on the part of the believer, that his Father in Heaven is "looking on" all the time. "Thou art a God who seest me." The presence of God is judgment, and judgment in its strict sense of absolute justice. He beholdeth the good as well as the evil. Forsyth set himself to retard the aforesaid tendency and to focus attention on the general application of the Gospel message to life as a whole.

Since the advent of Liberal Christian theology and its emphasis on the potential divinity of man, the Biblical teaching of the sinfulness of man and the consequent judgment on sin fell into the background. The former was a pleasing Gospel for an easy-going, good-natured, conventional Christianity; but it failed utterly to deal with the fact of guilt which Forsyth was not slow to point out was the universal moral problem of man. And so far as Evangelical Orthodoxy frankly, if crudely, recognised the fact that sin necessarily involved both guilt and judgment, it was nearer than Liberalism to an understanding of human nature and to a grasp of the moral reality of a holy God. Events of the last thirty years have done much to discredit the sunny optimism of Emerson, Swinburne and Wells with their glowing picture of the inborn excellence of man. Alas, man is still the sinner and by moral necessity is under judgment for his sin. Forsyth maintained that there can be no philosophy of ethics apart from some theory of judgment, and it was his convinced opinion that the Christian Evangelical view alone adequately met the case.

Dr Forsyth was tireless in pressing home the lesson that the goodness of God must never be allowed to minimise the severity of God. He is a God who may have to be severe at times in order to be kind. Holiness is bound up with Judgment[1] and Judgment with Redemption. He pours scorn on the soft Gospel of those who preach that there is no need to fear God.

> "You are afraid of God", you hear easy people say; "it is a great mistake to be afraid of God. There is nothing to be afraid of. God is love." But there is everything in the love of God to be afraid of. Love is not holy without judgment. It is the love of holy God that is the consuming fire.[2]

He maintains that the two spheres in which the judgment of

[1] *The Work of Christ*, p. 127. [2] ibid., p. 85.

God is most certainly revealed are those of conscience and history, conscience being the most universal element in man, and history being the social sphere in which the human will stands over against the Divine will. For a searching analysis of conscience from both the psychological and religious side Forsyth's teaching equals that of Kierkegaard in whom he found a kindred spirit. In conscience man finds that in spite of himself, he is critical of himself. There is in the soul a tribunal, a judge, a judge who is not in our own power, whom we cannot get rid of any more than we can escape from our own shadows. There can be no other conclusion but that "conscience is the word of God within us".[1] In the same passage discussing the relation between morality and religion, he affirms categorically: Whether morality involves religion or not, conscience involves God.[2] With this Dr Forsyth associates the consciousness of guilt which, he maintains, is universal, whatever name we attach to the experience. Where there is guilt there is judgment, guilt being the certain conviction, from which nothing can shake us, that we are personally responsible for our sin. Guilt is thus "the last problem of the race, its one central moral issue"[3]; and the issue is always one between the holy God and the guilt of man.[4] Forsyth is quite sure that, in spite of what may be said to the contrary, "the sense of guilt is still there; it is often more active than we are allowed to know".[5] He is greatly concerned lest preachers too readily accept the popular assumption that men no longer worry about their sins. They may not give the experience a religious name or think of it in religious terms; but their inward dissatisfaction and unrest makes inward happiness and peace impossible. Hence preachers must realise that the problem is still there and that the solution of the problem, if anywhere, is in their hands as the elect heralds of the Gospel of the redeeming God.

In the many pages which Forsyth gives to his study of the judgment of God in history, he anticipates in a remarkable way the general position held by Niebuhr that we can trace the hand of God within and above the rise and decline of nations and civilisations. Christ, he affirms, is the key to history[6]; and

[1] *The Cruciality of the Cross*, p. 127. [2] ibid.
[3] *The Justification of God*, p. 11. [4] *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, p. 5.
[5] *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind*, p. 103.
[6] *Faith, Freedom and the Future*, p. xiii.

all history through His great act at its moral centre is in God.[1] History is the scene of an endless conflict between the temporal and eternal in man, and the reason is that "for life and history the moral is the real".[2] Here Forsyth takes up a position similar in many respects to that later developed by Berdyaev.[3] The seat of the human problem is neither in the economic realm nor in that of psychology, but in the moral consciousness. Human history is *human* history and therefore moral.

> The conscience is the creative region of all history, and when that is set right with its holy Creator, all will be right in detail. It is there that humanity is one, in that which God has done for the conscience of the race.[4]

Social experiments without reference to the commanding figure around whom history revolves will only prove how necessary He is. There is judgment not only at the end of history but now and always. Dr Forsyth labours to demonstrate the truth of Schiller's oft quoted statement that the world's history is the world's judgment. He affirms with emphasis that judgment must take place within human history and experience, and that judgment is not complete without a day of Judgment, namely, a crisis, the Cross of Christ being the crisis of all crises for history.[5] He maintains that the tragedy of history is for Christian faith the judgment of God[6] and that a great moral tragedy such as war may, as judgment, be the servant of righteousness; but he is at pains to establish the restorative function of judgment as of more importance than the retributive aspect.[7] The apparent injustice of things he accepts as incidental to human experience, but as making no difference to the sure and inexorable victory of God. It is a vain inquiry, he says, whether the balance in the world at any given time is for good or evil. That is what we cannot tell, as moral values cannot be quantitatively measured[8]; but what we must set down is that no calculating sinner can indefinitely flout God with defiant impunity and confidence. God's judgment on things and in things, he maintains, is not absent because it is still, and it is not out of action because it is neither obvious nor obtrusive. He closes a great chapter on the subject with these memorable words:

[1] *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, p. 52.
[2] ibid., p. 222.
[3] *The Meaning of History* (1936).
[4] *The Justification of God*, p. 79.
[5] *The Work of Christ*, p. 132.
[6] *The Justification of God*, p. 176.
[7] *The Work of Christ*, p. 136.
[8] *The Justification of God*, p. 201.

> The non-intervention of God bears very heavy interest; and He is greatly to be feared when He does nothing. He moves in long orbits out of sight and sound. But He always arrives. Nothing can arrest the judgment of the Cross, nothing shake the judgment seat of Christ. The world gets a long time to pay, but all the accounts are kept—to the uttermost farthing.[1]

Forsyth also thought it most important that the preacher should pay more attention to what the New Testament has to say about the "presentness" as distinct from the futurity of judgment—about the Kingdom *come* as an essential preliminary to the Kingdom *coming*. His view is that judgment is something taking place now, also something that is a certainty for the future. God judges the world, he asserts, as He comes in Christ to all men. We are all standing before the judgment seat of Christ, and one day we shall know it.[2] History itself is judgment. Judgment is the visitation of a Saviour who "comes into affairs".[3] Judgment is a finality working *in* history, not after it.[4] He has a word of timely criticism for those who make the belief in the "Last Judgment" ineffective by limiting its reference to "a remote and pictorial future", and forget that the most important point about the judgment is that it is not a *date* but a *state*, "a judgment always there and final in its nature".[5] He warns preachers against saying too much about a day of Judgment sure though far, for "the Judge is at the door".[6] Christ is not judge merely at some future coming, but is eternal judge in His great work as the Crucified, a work historic, yet timeless and final.[7]

Nor does Dr Forsyth neglect the other equally important aspect of judgment as future, the time of reckoning when we shall give an account of our stewardship. In line with his general theory of the continual pervasion of time by Eternity, he is careful to show the inseparable connexion between what God has done in the past and what He plans for the future—past and future having only significance for the time series over which Eternity rules. While judgment must take place *within* human history, it is also the crucial point of its close; but we must not forget that for Christian faith the Judgment day of

[1] ibid., p. 216.
[2] *The Justification of God*, p. 194.
[3] ibid., p. 197.
[4] ibid., p. 199.
[5] *Missions in Church and State*, p. 72.
[6] *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind*, p. 153.
[7] *Missions in Church and State*, p. 73.

the great future assize draws its true solemnity of meaning from the judgment day on Pilate's hill.[1] What Dr Forsyth seems to suggest is that future judgment can have no meaning unless we know Him against whom we have sinned and the nature of the Holiness which requires of us so absolute an obedience. When we are called to account, it is because the accounts have been kept all the time. The final judgment is but the completion of the judgment passed daily on sinful man. We know our sin and we know our Judge. We are heirs of a great Redemption which we did not follow up, a Redemption which judged us then as it judges us now. He maintains that the last judgment on sin is already past in the sense that it has already been pronounced, and it was a judgment unto salvation. Any surprise there may be at the last will not be in the discovery that we were better men than we thought but in the discovery of the leniency and mercy of God. The Cross, as Forsyth understands the term, namely as the holy, judging, redeeming act of God "was the world's great day of judgment".[2] Judgment is a continual act of God extending over past and present and in command of the future. "The judgment", he reminds us, "at the end of history is the corollary of the judgment at the centre of history and the close of that daily judgment in which we live".[3] "It is less coming than come."[4] The fact that he has rejected so great a salvation only puts the sinner entirely at the mercy of the Redeemer-Judge, Saviour as well as King. Everything being taken into account, the final judgment is absolute justice.

Forsyth is well aware that the New Testament presents judgment sometimes as present and continual and sometimes as an event to be expected in the future. But the two views he rightly regards not as contradictory but rather as supplementary; for what may happen in the future, where moral experience is concerned, may be expected to be the consummation of what has happened in the past. Those who at the last were praised or censured for their behaviour towards "one of the least of these" were so dealt with because they were under observation all the time. A study of the relevant New Testament passages

[1] *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind*, p. 316.
[2] *The Work of Christ*, p. 133.
[3] *Missions in Church and State*, p. 316.
[4] ibid., p. 74.

dealing with the question will show how closely these two aspects of Judgment intertwine. His general finding is that the judgment of God is something taking place now and also something that is a certainty for the future. In addition, its certainty for the future is guaranteed by the fact that, like the Kingdom of which it is a corollary, it was pronounced and established at a central point in history, so that here as with the total act of Redemption, the past fact became a present power and the guarantee of the future.

Christian thought and experience are greatly in debt to P. T. Forsyth for the convincing and forcible way in which he established, with a scholar's acumen, the principle that central to Christian theology and thus central to a true philosophy of the Christian religion is the fact of a holy, judging, forgiving, redeeming God. Judgment is inseparably wrapped up with any true philosophy of ethics. Serious thought will find it difficult to refute Forsyth's contention that all true philosophy must in the end be *moral* philosophy. If we take the view which he strongly maintained that the moral is the real, and that "the test of philosophy is ethical conviction",[1] we realise the far-reaching significance of the fact of judgment for thought and life. It is of the nature of Holiness to convict of sin, to judge, and from judgment to redeem. The judgment is not vindictive but redemptive. "Holiness is Redemption's plan."

Is there not in the message of this prophet of judgment a direct word to the Church and to the world of our own day?

[1] *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, p. 197.

THE NUMBER OF THE SACRAMENTS

by The Rev. A. RAYMOND GEORGE

The Amsterdam literature has pointed out afresh the well-known fact that one of the points at issue between the Catholic and Protestant traditions is the number of the Sacraments, and it may well be that a discussion of this question would bring to light some of the other differences between these two traditions. An attempt is made in this paper to outline a Protestant view of the question. It is clear that "Catholic" is used here in a sense different from that which it bears in the historic creeds. Moreover, the contrast made between Catholic (chiefly Anglo-Catholic) and Protestant (chiefly non-Anglican) views is not intended to deny that the Church of England is in a sense Protestant, or to raise the question how far in loyalty to its formularies it can be other than Protestant.

It might at first sight appear that the difference is merely one of definition, for Protestantism has under some other name some at least of the so-called Seven Sacraments; so long as they are practised, what does it matter whether they are termed Sacraments, or, with the second Helvetic Confession, *instituta Dei utilia*? Moreover, some of these outward signs to which the most Puritan wing of the Protestants objected, such as the ring at marriage, have now been accepted by almost all Protestant Churches. It does moreover seem that the difficulty of defining the term "Sacrament" can be averted by using of Baptism and the Lord's Supper the term suggested in the XXVth Anglican Article, "There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel, that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord." These two Sacraments thus ordained are clearly distinguished from the others, and it does not seem to matter whether the others are called Sacraments or not. Even this simple view, however, has its difficulties. Neither Roman Catholics nor left-wing Protestants will accept the view that the "Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel" are two.

The Roman Catholics, as we can see from the Tridentine decisions, hold that all seven Sacraments were instituted by

Christ Himself; whether directly in some events unrecorded in the Bible but which we can deduce from tradition, or indirectly in the sense that they were instituted by His Will, we do not pause to inquire. It is not a view that non-episcopal Protestants would accept, nor, I imagine, many Anglicans, even of the Catholic tradition. The authority which they cite (for Confirmation, for instance) is usually scriptural, but not dominical.

On the other hand, the divine institution even of the two great Sacraments has been attacked by some Protestant scholars; and among those in each case who accept it, there is a certain confusion whether it rests on the literal acceptance of certain verses of Scripture or on such general considerations as that our Lord must have instituted rites which so rapidly became the practice of Christians. We are thus reminded of unsolved problems about the authority of Holy Scripture, but the divine institution will not be disputed here. Some scholars have suggested on the other hand that other rites have the same authority, notably the feet-washing, which is indeed sometimes practised but is not one of the "Seven Sacraments"; the reply that such a rite is intended to be "merely symbolic" will not persuade these scholars to distinguish this rite from the two commonly accepted Sacraments of the Gospel, for "merely symbolic" is precisely the term which many of these scholars would apply to Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We must leave such questionings as falling outside the main lines of the Protestant tradition, which clearly affirms that Christ instituted only two Sacraments.

The question is, must there be only two Sacraments, not only because Christ ordained it thus, but—we will not say, for some deeper reason—for some reason of a theological kind which our Lord's commands, consciously or unconsciously, took into account? Is there some danger to the purity of the faith in the admission of other rites besides these? Are there two great realities calling for two great Sacraments and precluding by their pre-eminence all similar institutions? We claim that there are. But the reason for this can only appear in a general discussion of the Sacraments.

We must distinguish the relation of the Sacraments to creation from their relation to redemption. To take, first, creation, we may say that there is a principle running through the created

world whereby the lower is the vehicle of, or symbolic of, or revelatory of, the higher. This is sometimes called the sacramental principle. All nature is, on this view, a revelation of God. "The heavens declare the glory of God" (Ps. 19). But the supreme Sacrament, on this view, is Christ Himself. The purpose of life is to discern those realities which are thus sacramentally set forth to us, and so to order the matter of this world that it may fulfil its sacramental function. Sin would consist of a failure to see, or an ordering of the lower which would conceal, these higher realities. Redemption would consist, in so far as it entered this scheme at all, of a removal of the obstacles to the vision of the highest reality. This is a view which has affinities to, and draws its ideas from, a large number of schemes of thought. The relation of the particulars to the Forms in Plato, the static Greek conception of the Deity, the speculative life commended by the Greeks, the vision of the mystics, the allurements of pantheism, the faded attractions of the Hegelian Absolute, may all have played their part. "Creation is Incarnation" is a watchword sometimes heard, and our feeling that such a scheme puts the uniqueness of the Incarnation in peril is well expressed by the warning once given, "The eternal begetting of the Son is not the same as the creation of the world".[1]

When this view is fully held, then the Sacraments are a convenient illustration of the principle that runs through all life. To confine ourselves to the Eucharist, the bread and the wine are there held to represent the whole industrial and agricultural life of man. Not only God's gift, but man's labour, is said to be symbolised by the fact that we have here bread, not corn; wine, not grapes. On this view, the Offertory, the offering of the unconsecrated elements, is an important feature of the service; it is in this context that experiments are made, as for instance at Iona, in reviving the Offertory Procession or Great Entrance. Those who stress other traditions usually have the Table spread at the beginning of the rite; and, though it has in fact been spread by human hands, the fact that it stands ready may be intended as a symbol of the divine initiative. "My God, and is Thy Table spread?"[2] On the view that the

[1] F. H. Brabant in *Essays on the Trinity and the Incarnation*, p. 349. Cf. Leonard Hodgson, *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, p. 131.

[2] Hymn by P. Doddridge, *English Hymnal*, No. 320.

Eucharist is thus connected with creation, a Harvest Festival is seen to be a sort of incomplete Eucharist. It may be noted incidentally that the theory that the bread and wine are used to represent all food and thus all agriculture and industry is one that could find no parallel in the case of Baptism, where it would be eccentric to suggest that one main purpose of the Sacrament was to hallow all water. This theory, sometimes derided by its opponents as "Jocist romanticism",[1] has been the main support, particularly in Anglo-Catholic circles, of much Christian social doctrine.

Now this notion that the sacramental elements represent the whole created world, as well as man's work in it, is capable of modification in various apparently dissimilar directions.

(*a*) It leads fairly naturally to the idea that if the sacramental elements represent *all* created things, it would be better not to concentrate attention on some only. History shows that what starts by representing other things is almost certain to finish by excluding them. Therefore let the whole world, or at least every meal, be regarded as a Sacrament. This I imagine to be the position of the Society of Friends, who would strongly repudiate the notion that they do not believe in the sacramental life. There is with them a similar repudiation of holy people, priests and the like, holy buildings, and so on, all in the same interest.

(*b*) It may lead to the casual attribution of the name "Sacrament" to anything which strikes the individual as conveying with outstanding clearness spiritual meaning. This underlies the thought of some Liberal Protestants.[2] Bread and wine are used, they say, by a sort of arbitrary convention, but the common food and drink of the day would do just as well. The sharing of sandwiches and a cup of tea (so they assert) might in certain circumstances produce a better impression on the mind than the conventional symbols. The sacramental value of flowers is also stressed, and a vase of flowers often stands on a Communion Table where a Cross might have been expected. Some would frankly admit that flowers speak more potently

[1] Whether this is fair to the Jocists, I do not know. I certainly do not wish to attack that movement.

[2] I use "liberal" in a sense now common, without denying that there is a sense in which we ought all to be liberal, and without in any way repudiating the great gains achieved by critical scholarship.

to them than bread and wine. This mode of thought is utterly remote from the classic Protestant tradition.

(*c*) A third possible development of the linking of the Sacraments with creation is the Catholic multiplication of the number of the Sacraments. The use of outward signs very considerably exceeds the seven Sacraments. Thus for instance even in Anglicanism the opinion has been canvassed that the Coronation of the King is a Sacrament, and the blessings of Palm Crosses, rosaries, holy water and so on, also of Churches, graveyards and the like, are all quasi-sacramental. Some few of these, such as the consecration of Churches, windows, flags, and the like, have found their way into Protestantism, but are ill at ease in that tradition. The total number of rites possibly to be considered as Sacraments before the Middle Ages certainly came to at least fifteen (some reckon thirty), and various writers give various lists of the Sacraments, just as at an earlier period various lists were given of the Canonical Books. It was not till the twelfth century that the number of the Sacraments was fixed at seven, and the other rites were entitled "sacramentals". The choice of this number was no doubt influenced by the special sanctity of the number seven, and by the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit. (Some Catholics object to the idea that they multiplied the Sacraments; they claim credit rather for effecting a considerable diminution. But the diminution was preceded by the multiplication; there are not fifteen Sacraments in the New Testament.) This tendency to restrict the number of the Sacraments led to a further development at the Council of Trent, possibly through an unconscious acceptance of Protestant influence. Those are anathematised who deny that the Sacraments were instituted by our Lord. Thus, as we have already noted, the same test is applied as by Protestants, though with different results, and a check is imposed which would prevent the growth of further Sacraments. It is moreover asserted that the Eucharist far surpasses the others. Thus the Catholic practice (for non-Romans of the Catholic tradition would doubtless agree) sets some limits on those tendencies which arise from regarding the Sacraments as connected chiefly with creation. Catholics will not like their view of the Sacraments being linked with the views of the Quakers and the Liberal Protestants; and of course there are enormous differ-

ences; but there are characteristics in common, and the connexion between them is that they all link the Sacraments closely with creation.

We now come to the connexion of the Sacraments with redemption which the foregoing view tends to neglect. The universe before the Fall may have been a perfect expression of the sacramental principle, and all nature may have been a perfect expression of the divine. But, on the Protestant view, what happened at the Fall was not a descent from super-nature to nature, but from nature to sub-nature, so that what we now call nature and "the natural man" (admittedly with a certain linguistic inconsistency) is really sub-nature. The whole creation, so far from mirroring the divine, groaneth and travaileth together (Rom. 8.22). It waits to be redeemed, not simply to be perfected by grace. The natural is not of itself a sacramental expression of God's grace; the material elements are themselves a part of the world that needs to be redeemed. Catholics sometimes show a grasp of this point without abandoning their interest in the elements at the Offertory by pointing out that the elements are themselves the products of our sinful world, of sweated labour, and so forth. Thus, for instance, during the war, the brownness of the Eucharistic bread might be regarded as a symbol of the war.

How then does a piece of the world come to be used as a sacramental sign at all? The answer lies in the divine institution. By Christ's institution they are permitted to be the outward signs of redemption. They derive their significance from what they are in relation to redemption rather than from what they are in relation to creation. To put this Protestant point in rather Catholic categories, what matters is what they represent after the Consecration, not at the Offertory. On the view which we previously outlined the divine institution hardly does more than confirm the obvious suitability of the elements to represent a higher level of being; on the view which is now being expounded, the elements would quite lack significance without the divine institution. On the former view the elements derive their significance from their position in nature; on the latter view, from their position in history. It is the latter view that does justice to the scandal of particularity, and thus at the deepest level to the Incarnation itself. Usually, however,

the former view is more closely associated with the Incarnation and the latter with the Death of Christ.

This latter view is the view of Classic Protestantism, but it is not entirely confined to it. In a sense the Roman view is nearer to it than are the Anglo-Catholic and the Orthodox. It is true, as Dom Gregory Dix has maintained, that Romans and Protestants alike are children of the Middle Ages. Indeed the interest of the West in sin and grace goes back to St. Augustine. We may well be glad that we are not tied to his theories, but the interest in these subjects and thus in redemption may well be an advantage which the West has over the East. Thus, though Rome is involved in the Catholic multiplication of the Sacraments, the Roman Mass, with its emphasis on Sacrifice, is to this extent right that it links the Eucharist closely with the Death of Christ. Thus the recent Anglican absorption in the Incarnation, fruitful as it has been in the sphere of social reform, may have been not so much a recovery of wholeness as a departure from the norm.

It may be said that these two conceptions of the Sacraments can be combined, that we can relate them both to creation and to redemption, both to nature and to history.[1] This may be so, but we must be careful to give redemption the dominant place. We need not expound here how these two aspects of the Sacraments are to be related. The point is that the important connexion between the Sacraments and redemption precludes the indefinite multiplication of the number of the Sacraments, as the Council of Trent dimly recognised. Those only can be counted as Sacraments which bear some definite relation to redemption and the number of ways in which a rite could be related to redemption is limited. For a sign to be deemed a Sacrament, it is not enough that it should be thought by its beauty or the like to mirror the divine.

Before we pass on, however, we may notice that the distinction which has been drawn between the relation of Sacraments to creation and their relation to redemption corresponds roughly to what O. C. Quick in *The Christian Sacraments* called

[1] Some critics of my view say that it makes a false dichotomy by overlooking that close connexion between creation and redemption represented by Irenaeus' doctrine of recapitulation, whereby redemption is the restoration of the original creation as Christ is the "second Adam". (But this does not alter the fact that creation and redemption are clearly distinguishable from each other.)

the distinction between aesthetic and ethical sacramentalism. Moreover, to use another of Quick's distinctions, the former of these emphasises the symbolic aspect of the Sacraments; the latter, their effective aspect. The former is more Hellenic; the latter, more Hebraic. It is often supposed that Protestantism stands for purely symbolic views of the Sacraments, but that is true only of Liberal Protestantism. Classic Protestantism, though indeed it may claim to think of the action of the Sacraments in a different and less mechanical way than the Catholic tradition, nevertheless stresses their effective character, and this Hebraic note corresponds to the re-assertion of the motif *Agape* at the Reformation.

Incidentally, while we Protestants assert the real action of God in the Sacraments, we are somewhat shy of such phrases as *ex opere operato*, though indeed that is to be preferred to *ex opere operantis*. It has however been explained to us that there is an implicit condition, namely "to those who do not place an obstacle", and that the lack of that faith which we deem so necessary might well be regarded as an obstacle. We are further comforted by the maxim *Deus non alligatur sacramentis suis; nos autem alligamur*. But we still feel doubtful and are prone to bring accusations of "magic". What lies behind this is a concern to preserve the personal confrontational *I-thou* character of our relation with God, which much of the talk about channels of grace and so on seems to obscure. Transubstantiation seems to us to resemble verbal inspiration, predestination and Apollinarianism in stressing the divine side only. The latest watchword from the Catholic side seems to be "ontological"; it is assumed that the Protestant will reply with "psychological"; this is only true of Liberal Protestantism. Perhaps the proper word for Classic Protestantism is "relational". When a Sacrament is administered, the change is not merely a psychological change in the recipient, nor necessarily a psychological change at all; nor is it necessarily, if indeed at all, an ontological one; but the recipient stands in a new relation to God and God to him, whether the recipient avails himself of that relation or not.

There is one other contrast which may be mentioned. That type of sacramentalism which is linked with the creation is apt to think of the outward signs as *veiling* from us the presence of God. They are the garments behind which the unbearable

Majesty of God lies concealed. Some pantheists would write thus of nature, and the Eucharistic hymns of St. Thomas Aquinas have made it a common way of speaking of the Eucharist. But on the view which connects the Sacraments with redemption, the signs *show forth* or proclaim Christ and His salvation. It may well be thought that the former view overthrows the nature of a Sacrament, and that the latter is Biblical.

But to return to the question of the number of the Sacraments which can properly be related to redemption, it is clear that there is room first for a Sacrament of initiation, an eschatological Sacrament which corresponds to the translation of the individual into the life of the age to come, which speaks of what Christ did once for all for our redemption, and corresponds to justification and regeneration. If the effect of this Sacrament were to "land us all in heaven",[1] there would be no need for another, but in fact we continue to live in this present evil world; we remain sinners, though justified and regenerate; we press on indeed, according to the Methodist view, at least, to entire sanctification, but even after that is reached, we are still in this world, and in constant dependence on the grace of God. As Charles Wesley[2] wrote,

> Every moment, Lord, I want
> The merit of Thy death.

There is thus, secondly, a Sacrament of gradual sanctification, of growth in grace, of constant dependence, like the first related to the redemption wrought once for all by Christ. The former Sacrament says that we are put in the right; the latter, that we are still in the wrong; in the former, we think of something given once and for all; in the latter, of something to be given from moment to moment. Both are set in an eschatological tension; both speak of a real presence here, and an advent presence yet to come. Yet, paradoxically, it is the Sacrament of initiation which speaks most clearly of the real presence; and in the Sacrament of continuance, the futurist-eschatological element is more prominent.[3] We proclaim the

[1] A phrase used, not in this context, by Charles Wesley (*Methodist Hymnbook*, No. 824).

[2] *Methodist Hymnbook*, No. 459.

[3] Two or three sentences here are paraphrased from an unpublished paper of Dr. T. F. Torrance.

Lord's death "till He come". *Maranatha*—the note was once prominent in the Eucharistic liturgy, but is now partly lost.

These two Sacraments were indeed in the early Church almost regarded as one Sacrament, for the initiatory rite, which we will for the moment call Baptism, though it included other items, was usually followed at once by the Eucharist, the First Communion of the candidate. Wladimir Weidlé has recently contended with a good deal of evidence in *The Baptism of Art* that the Church thought of one supreme Sacrament which began with Baptism and culminated in the Eucharist. The Sunday Eucharist was a kind of reminiscent reproduction of the latter part of this, with the *synaxis* taking the place of the Baptism. But if this is so, the "One Sacrament" developed into our two, not into our seven. Many of the Fathers gave support to the number two, in their exegesis of John 19.34, where they explained the blood and water which flowed from the side of Christ as referring to the Eucharist and Baptism, though there was an alternative explanation that they referred to Baptism by martyrdom and ordinary Baptism.

But while we take it for granted that of these two Sacraments the second is the Eucharist, what precisely is the first, which we have provisionally called Baptism? Is it simply Baptism, or is it Baptism with Confirmation or Chrism? We may begin an examination of the five remaining so-called Sacraments with Confirmation and its relation to Baptism; and that will pave the way for examining Penance and Unction in relation to the Eucharist. We omit an examination of Matrimony, which stands a little apart from the rest of the seven as being also a natural condition. We also omit Holy Orders, for the difference between the Catholic and the Protestant conceptions of the ministry turns on many other questions beside the question whether Ordination is a Sacrament; and these well-worn questions are too large to be handled here.

We turn then to the relation of Confirmation to Baptism.[1] The paedo-baptist Free Churches in England are commonly supposed to hold a lower view of Baptism than the Anglicans, but they now tend to abandon this as Liberal Protestant, and to assert that Baptism is a complete Sacrament, speaking of the whole Christ, and to contrast this with the new or revived

[1] See especially W. F. Flemington, *The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism.*

Anglican emphasis on the incompleteness of Baptism apart from Confirmation. The positions normally held in fairly recent years are thus somewhat reversed, though these new or revived views have probably not yet found widespread acceptance on either side. This Free Church[1] emphasis on the completeness of Baptism is a point on which paedo-baptists and Baptists are agreed; they differ as to what constitutes a valid Baptism. Of the new Anglican view we should say this: even if it be granted that the original Sacrament of initiation consisted of Baptism and Chrism, yet the separation of the two in time has altered matters. As O. C. Quick said (*The Christian Sacraments*, 184), "A theory which declares that Confirmation marks the first gift of the indwelling Spirit, and a practice which places Confirmation a dozen years or more after Baptism, point, when taken together, to conclusions which are intolerable". Nor is it plausible to suggest that before Confirmation the Spirit operates externally, and thereafter internally, and the like. There is perhaps something to be said for transferring Confirmation to infancy, but nothing for such views. But in fact we do not concede that Confirmation or Chrism is essential to the Sacrament of initiation at all. Baptism may stand alone as that Sacrament.

This does not indeed entirely dispose of the matter from the Free Church point of view. A most important stage in the Christian life does indeed occur in adolescence. There is often a great more or less sudden change which merits the name of conversion; even when this does not occur so markedly, there should be a conscious committal of oneself to Christ, in penitence and faith, a voluntary acceptance of the loyalty which has been accepted, as it were, vicariously. The new emphasis on Baptism must not be allowed in any way to diminish the importance of bringing adolescents to this act of self-committal. There is also the entry into full communion, if by that is meant communion at the Lord's Table. And this may be fittingly marked by some outward act of an initiatory kind. Nor do I see that there is any reason why this should not be called Confirmation, so long as no erroneous theory is attached to it. Certainly we should not wish to say that Catholics are able to bestow some grace in Confirmation which we are incapable

[1] I use "Free Church" throughout in the English sense.

of bestowing, just as we cannot be content with schemes of mutual supplementary ordination which presuppose that the non-episcopal Churches only claim some sort of prophetic ministry (which on the Catholic view can easily be conceded to them) and make no claim to possess the Catholic priesthood, which they would be very willing to receive. It is in a sense true that they do not claim the Catholic priesthood, but surely it is clear that the only things which they do not claim are the things which they conceive not to exist. When they ordain, they claim the fulness of the Christian Ministry as Christ intended it, or, in a good Catholic phrase, they intend to do what the Church does; and incidentally they can no more see what need there is of consecration to an episcopate after ordination to the presbyterate than they can see what need there is of Confirmation, sacramentally understood, after Baptism. In each case wholeness seems to be imperilled. Similarly, therefore, with regard to Confirmation, the non-episcopal Churches do not conceive that they neglect to do whatever Catholics rightly claim must be done; but this is done either at Baptism, or, non-sacramentally, at reception into communicant status.

It may, however, still be urged against giving a rich content to Baptism rather than to Baptism with Confirmation that the fulness of salvation is not to be ascribed to an infant. If this denial were in every sense correct, there would be no alternative but the Baptist position; but, in fact, the defence of paedobaptism necessitated even by those theories which regard it as an incomplete Sacrament will go a long way towards defending it as complete. Once the difficulty is overcome about baptising infants at all, the subsequent difficulties are not so great. No Church considers that the Baptism of infants in itself effects something so remarkable and far-reaching that salvation is then incapable of being lost. Even if it were conceded that Baptism confers *character indelebilis*, it would by no means follow in the case of adults that possession of that *character* would be a guarantee of salvation. There is thus a sense in which an adult must appropriate the salvation involved in Baptism, or at the very least succeed in not losing it; and the committal involved in conversion is associated with this appropriation. We might indeed be tempted to say that in Baptism an infant is saved "sacramentally", and at conversion an adolescent or adult is

saved "psychologically", or perhaps "actually", were it not for the unfortunate suggestion that there are two salvations. Indeed there might be said to be three or four, for on the Methodist view entire sanctification marks a further salvation, and in another sense we are not saved till the Last Judgment. The fact surely is that what the German idiom would call the "when" of salvation is mysterious and paradoxical; it cannot be fixed in time. But at whatever level, so to speak, Baptism is connected with salvation, at that level it is connected with it completely. It might be said to effect it, subject to some later necessity of not losing it; or it might be said to foreshadow it symbolically; or it might be said to declare it; but whatever it does, it does completely. That salvation needs to be implemented or appropriated or claimed or psychologically realised or whatever is the correct term, at other levels; but everything has been done at the sacramental level; there is no need to supplement it with a Sacrament or quasi-sacrament. Thus, as Dr. Torrance says,[1] the eschatological wholeness of the Church is impugned by "the division of baptism into two *moments* of salvation (where confirmation either injures the completeness of baptism in its once-for-all character or anticipates its fulfilment in the *Parousia*)."

We turn now to the Sacraments so-called which imperil the Eucharist, of which the clearest case is Penance. It is true that there was a certain tendency in early Lutheranism to regard this as a Sacrament, but this did not last long. The practice indeed to some extent survived in Lutheranism, and is being revived to-day, but it was not long held to be a Sacrament. The Protestant cannot but be struck by the difference between this and the rest of the seven. We are told that "strictly speaking, there is no 'matter', nothing corresponding to the water in baptism".[2] Trent therefore spoke of *quasi-materia*, and this is divided into *proxima materia*, the acts which the penitent has to perform, and *remota materia*, post-baptismal sin committed by the penitent. Apparently it is sometimes difficult to find enough matter. Then the penitent must mention some mortal sin previously confessed, and absolution may then be given.[3] It may

[1] *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 2 No. 1, March 1949, p. 86.
[2] C. B. Moss, *The Christian Faith*, p. 429.
[3] F. G. Belton, *A Manual for Confessors*, pp. 12-14.

well be that this conception of the matter has only arisen since the abolition of the imposition of hands in Absolution, which once provided a quite different "matter", but the modern (and indeed Tridentine) exposition illustrates the curious straits to which Catholic teachers are sometimes reduced. Further, Absolution was until the Middle Ages usually in the form of a prayer, not a declaration. But any Christian might reasonably say to another, "May God forgive you", and one cannot but suspect that such a prayer has been exalted into a Sacrament. Again, it is usually conceded by Anglicans, at least, that God forgives those who sincerely repent and believe, so that sacramental confession is not essential to salvation. It is then often added that it conveys an assurance that could not be conveyed in any other way; yet we are told that if a priest forgives someone who ought not to be forgiven, God will revise his decision[1]; and that Absolution is only effective when or in so far as there is genuine penitence; so that Absolution comes to this, that the priest implies, though he does not say, "*If* you have genuine repentance and faith, God will forgive you". But Catholics will concede that so much might be said by any Christian. Again, there is a sort of public Absolution, jealously reserved to priests, at Holy Communion, and in the Choir Offices of Morning and Evening Prayer. If this is a real Absolution, why do those who receive it need private Absolution also? Anglo-Catholics say that this formula at Morning and Evening Prayer (and presumably at the Communion) is not really "Absolution". But it is so described in the rubric; and if it is not, why is it confined to priests? And if it is not possible properly to absolve a body of people together, why is that permitted in an emergency like a shipwreck?

The fact surely is that to declare God's forgiveness to a penitent is a form of preaching God's Word. It may be psychologically desirable that some people should confess their sins in private; Methodism at one time provided for semi-private confession in its band-meetings. It may be desirable that this should be done only to the Ministers of the Church. It might even in some cases be thought psychologically desirable (though I doubt it) that the Minister should pronounce something verbally resembling even a declaratory Absolution; but what such

[1] Moss, op. cit., p. 429.

a Minister would be doing would be to preach to an individual the grace of God.

This leads us to refer to preaching, which we have intentionally deferred to this point. Preaching is sometimes said by Protestants to be sacramental or even a Sacrament; but this is only a loose way of giving to preaching a very high place. Protestants abhor the notion that whereas in the Eucharist something is being transacted between God and man, and in prayer also man is speaking to God, yet in preaching nothing is being transacted, and we hear but a man speaking to men. On the Protestant view, through preaching, as through the Sacraments, God is at work in men's hearts, perhaps even bringing them thereby to conversion; in preaching God speaks to men through His servants, so that preaching is at least as solemn an occupation as prayer. The Protestant is not opposed to the cultus. He does not wish to replace the Sacrament by the Sermon. He has no objection to liturgy, even to a certain fixity in the liturgy, so long as the Spirit is not thereby impeded; but he does desire that at the heart of the Eucharist, which he sees as a great corporate feast of the Church, not a private transaction to be daily or almost hourly performed in a corner, there should stand the solemn preaching of the Word. In the English Free Churches the Lord's Supper is often thought of as a separate service held "at the close" of the preaching-service. But Dr. Maxwell's books[1] show the true relationship; the Sermon at the preaching-service on the Communion Sunday is within the Eucharistic liturgy. In Methodism the first Order of Holy Communion really calls for a Sermon after the Creed. But this solemn preaching within the liturgy is but a part of a constant activity of preaching and witnessing, and in this activity the act of assuring an individual of God's forgiveness may often form a part.

Thus the Eucharist, including within itself the preaching of the Word, contains all that is needful for the continuance of the individual in the Christian way, though there are other means of grace of a non-sacramental kind, "choir offices", Bible reading, prayer, and so on. Of these, I should have no objection to the phrase, "They are like bits of the Eucharist

[1] W. D. Maxwell, especially *An Outline of Christian Worship* and *Concerning Worship*.

taken separately."[1] No sacramental penance, no *Asperges*, no adult Baptism sought by reason of doubts about an infant Baptism already received are necessary to supplement the Word and the Eucharist. All that can be sacramentally conveyed or effected or declared or symbolised about continuing in salvation is thus conveyed, effected, declared or symbolised there.

The same considerations apply to Unction. As Absolution is preaching wrongly turned into a Sacrament, so Unction is intercessory prayer wrongly turned into a Sacrament. The Eucharist is itself sacramental medicine (in so far as that phrase is appropriate at all) for the soul *and the body*; it can be devotionally supplemented only by prayer. It must be difficult for a Catholic to explain to a dying man why two Sacraments are necessary, Unction and Communion, not to mention Absolution. If he has received all that the Eucharist can convey, of what further protection does he stand in need at the Judgment?

To conclude, the Protestant objection to seven Sacraments is not just a quibble about definition, nor are we concerned to forbid ordinances and customs which are of value, such as marking the entry into communicant status with a solemn ceremony. Still less do we wish to abolish Sacraments altogether. But we are concerned that the Sacraments shall be considered not primarily in an incarnational or immanentist context, but in a soteriological one; and we maintain that when they are so considered, their number is necessarily limited to two great Sacraments which correspond to two great aspects of salvation, to which there can be no supplements without overlapping. We maintain moreover that in these two Sacraments, as also in a different mode, in preaching, the whole Christ is present with His salvation; and when we hear other phrases such as "historic continuity", "episcopal succession", "wholeness of tradition", we do not understand what these can add to the fulness of salvation and the whole Christ.

[1] I quote roughly from memory a phrase which I heard William Temple use in an address.

EXISTENTIALISM IN FRANCE[1]

by The Rev. J. MATHERS

I HAVE chosen to speak of Existentialism in France for two reasons. First because it is in France that Existential thinking has won its most distinguished success, both as a fashionable craze among laymen, and in the region of philosophical research. Amongst contemporary Existential thinkers, Jean-Paul Sartre and Gabriel Marcel stand out as leaders, and it is to their contrasting types of thinking that we shall pay most attention. But the second reason for confining attention mainly to French Existentialism is that there are so many other types of Existential thinking to be found in various countries. Not only France, but Denmark, Germany, Russia, Italy, Spain, and to a lesser degree America and Britain, have thinkers whose basis of thought is existentialist. And as Foulquié says: "There are as many Existentialisms as there are Existentialist philosophers". Moreover the claim is made that Existentialist modes of thought are to be found even in Classical Philosophy. Mounier in his book *Existentialist Philosophies* has an interesting illustration which throws light on this history of Existentialism. He calls it "the Existential Tree". Below the ground the several roots of this tree are labelled "Socrates", "Stoics", "St. Augustine" and "St. Bernard". Where the stem emerges from the ground we find "Pascal". The long trunk bears the name of "Kierkegaard". At the top of the trunk, before the branches spread out, "Phenomenology" indicates that this type of philosophy is a basis of most modern Existentialist thinking. The branches are labelled with fourteen names, representing authors from various countries. On the extreme right we find the names of "Jaspers" and "Marcel", followed by "Chestov", "Berdyaev", "Buber", and "Karl Barth". On the extreme left a thick branch has at its base the name of "Nietzsche", followed by "Heidegger", and at the point "Sartre". This illustration well gives an idea of the sources and variety of Existential thinking, a detailed description of which would fill several volumes.

[1] A paper read to the Edinburgh Theological Club, June 1950.

Apart from this largeness of the subject, another difficulty faces the essayist. Existentialism employs a terminology which is dramatic, obscure and puzzling. "Existence", "Essence", "Being", "Freedom", "Choice", "Estrangement", "Engagement", "Transcendence", "Abandonment", "Anguish", "Nausea": in Existentialist thought all these words have a meaning which is both strange and difficult, being either a modification or limitation of their ordinary sense. Definitions of these terms are nowhere to be found, for Existentialist writers have faithfully followed the dictum of their master, Kierkegaard, who wrote: "In the matter of existential concepts the desire to avoid definitions is a proof of tact". All we can do is to divine their meaning by reading between the lines in the many works of imagination by means of which modern Existentialists promulgate their gospel.

There are, however, certain fundamental principles which are shared in by most Existentialist thinkers which may now be set forth.

The first of these is the total devaluation of all manner of abstract thinking. In traditional philosophy reason contemplating the world, presented to it, has found an order and meaning in it, on the basis of which man can build up his life. The existence of things or persons depends on their conforming to their types or essences which reason has discovered. Thus the existence of a stone or a tree is explained by its conformity to the nature or essence of a stone or a tree. The existence of material things, however, is determined, that is it comes about mechanistically and must conform to type. But a man, being possessed of free-will, can in part at least determine the quality of his own existence. A man may be in a greater or less degree a true man in so far as he wills to be in a greater or less degree the ideal man. "Whether we take the morality taught by the great Greek philosophers, that of Christian thinkers, or that of the eighteenth century agnostics, all presuppose a human type to be regarded as an ideal, towards which it is desirable, if not an absolute obligation, to approximate."[1]

The existentialists reject as "vain fabrications of the mind" any ideal world of this kind, and admit no norms whatever for the direction of human life. It is for each individual to create

[1] Paul Foulquié, *Existentialism*, p. 55.

his own norm. "What he must be is nowhere written down; it is for himself to invent it. Man therefore advances in life as in a starless night, along a road bordered with precipices."[1] It is his consciousness of this dilemma that gives rise to the existential anguish.

Most modern Existentialists are phenomenologists. They do not however totally deny the existence of external reality. Rather they follow the phenomenology of the German philosopher Husserl, under whom Sartre studied. Husserl concentrates attention on phenomena—that which is given to consciousness. He admits that the world thus perceived may in a certain sense be still there for me. It continues to appear to me, as it hitherto has appeared. But as a philosopher he does not admit that belief as valid. He places it "in parenthesis". He thus does away with everything that has a meaning—the objective world—and directs attention to that from which everything takes on a meaning: pure consciousness. Sartre goes further and says that the world is not a world made up of material objects, independent of the knowledge we have of them. "Modern thought," he writes, "has achieved considerable progress by reducing the existent entity to a series of appearances, which make it manifest. . . . The being of an existent entity is precisely what it *appears*. . . . Our theory of the phenomenon has replaced the *reality* of the thing, by the *objectivity* of the phenomenon." What is implied in this principle we shall consider later when we review Sartre's type of existentialism.

Meanwhile we shall try to indicate what is meant by *existence* in existential thought. Existence does not admit of definition. It is not an attribute but is the reality which is behind or in all attributes. Thus "I am not tall, fair, a smoker, and existing. For I am not tall, fair, and a smoker, unless I exist." "Existence", says Jaspers, "is not a concept, but an index which points to what is beyond all objectivity." "To exist" is not the same as "to be". "Thus the stones *are*, but they do not exist outside the mentality which alone can call them into existence."

We must be careful not to give the term "existence" its usual meaning of "being", supposing that one can exist as one is born. For here "existence" is not a state but an act, the passing of a possibility into reality. "To exist is to take leave

[1] op. cit., p. 55.

of what one is (*ex*) in order to establish oneself (*sistere*) on the level that formerly was only possible."[1]

Existentialists are fond of describing this leap towards being by the catchword "existence comes before essence". As we have already indicated, this is a complete reversal of the doctrine of traditional philosophy. What is meant by this catchword has been clearly defined by Sartre in these words: "What do we mean by saying that existence precedes essence? We mean that man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world—and defines himself afterwards. If man, as the Existentialist sees him, is not definable, it is because to begin with he is nothing. He will not be anything until later, and then he will be what he makes of himself. Thus there is no human nature . . . Man simply is. Not that he is simply what he conceives himself to be, but he is what he wills, and as he conceives himself after already existing—after he wills to be, after that leap towards existence. Man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself. That is the first principle of existentialism."[2]

It is evident that for such a development of being freedom of choice is necessary. Changes in matter are determined by their causes, and in physical phenomena there is not that surge of becoming that indicates true existence. True becoming and true existence necessitate liberty. And as liberty of choice belongs only to men, veritable existence is only to be found in man. But not all men possess genuine existence. We have said that man is not born into existence, and if ever he becomes static in a type of life that he has chosen he does not continue to exist. "Existence is a perpetual transcendence, that is to say a passing beyond that which one is." This quotation from Sartre illustrates the meaning that existentialists give to the word transcendence, the act of passing to a new stage of being consequent on the exercise of a free choice.

Not many men, however, can claim to possess this prize of true existence. Existentialism is a minority movement. The majority are swayed by the mass, and do not make a free personal choice. Such do not have an authentic existence; and for Sartre are beneath contempt. "For J. P. Sartre, as for Jaspers and Heidegger, only the man who chooses freely to be himself, who makes himself, who is his own work, can truly be

[1] op. cit., p. 49. [2] Sartre, *Existentialism and Humanism*, p. 28.

said to exist."[1] It is this type of man, in contrast to static or wayward characters, that figure so freely in existential plays and novels.

We have seen that for the existentialist every situation in which he finds himself has no meaning. The things that surround him and obtrude themselves on his consciousness form neither a cosmos nor a creation. The external world is utterly crude and fluent. Man is accordingly unrelated to the reality which encircles him. He can find no inherent meaning in it. Without any will of his own he has been thrown into an absurd world not of his choice. This is what the existentialist means by "estrangement", and this is the source of an inherent uneasiness in living, of nausea, or anguish.

Yet while this is so, it is equally true that he needs the world in order that he may exist. Consciousness, when empty, is nothing. "To exist", it is claimed, "is not merely to be, but to be here or there; to be in a situation." "The expression 'inner life' by which psychologists designate the existence of consciousness is deceptive; consciousness is turned toward the outer world, it consists of attachment to the outer world; a consciousness which is not conscious of something distinct from itself is nothing. Thus man while basically unrelated to the crude world is engaged in the world. He is passively engaged because he finds himself in a situation he did not create; he is actively engaged because he cannot remain neutral in any situation; by his choices of action he modifies it. We find ourselves engaged then without having engaged ourselves, because we were not consulted before being thrown into the world. But being thus involved in the world we must engage and engage freely, even though we have no enlightenment to engage ourselves wisely. Man therefore advances in life as in "a starless night along a road bordered with precipices."

In the midst of this necessity of engagement the existentialist gospel urgently proclaims human freedom. But we must carefully distinguish what is meant here. The freedom which is indicated is not the freedom of choice between two or more alternatives on the basis of rational deliberation. Being conscious of his estrangement the freedom of a man comes before and makes possible freedom of choice. Such freedom is com-

[1] op. cit., p. 50.

mitment to nothing. There is no meaning or value inherent in such an act of freedom. It is a leap in the dark.

Sartre gives a picture of this crisis in which man is involved every time he makes a decisive choice. "In it man is seen as placed on the brink of an abyss—the abyss representing Nought (the void in which all meaning is lost), as well as freedom in the sense defined. He is then seized by giddiness, an emotion in which two opposite tendencies are confusingly blended. Giddiness makes him withdraw, while at the same time a sweet and sinister fascination bids him step over and let himself fall."

Here the picture ends. We may imagine a variety of sequels. Thus we may imagine either a devout ending, or a tragic one. In the first case the sufferer would be carried across the abyss by the hands of grace, and landed on the firm ground of faith. Tertullian is a case in point: —*credo quia absurdum*. In the second case his vertigo would hurl him to destruction.

It is at this point that existentialists divide into two well-defined camps, the theists and the atheists. For the Christian, Kierkegaard, the discomfiture of reason became the triumph of faith, and the central Christian mystery, Incarnation, confounded the claims of rational metaphysics. For him faith is unacceptable to reason, its intellectual offensiveness being insisted on. Karl Barth followed Kierkegaard in this attitude, but shifted the emphasis from the mystery of the Incarnation to the hearing of the Word of God by men prepared for such communion through crisis. The atheist, Jean-Paul Sartre, excluding faith as a fabrication of the intellect, developed his own dread-inspired and nought-centred world picture. "There is no human nature," he exclaims, "because there is no God to conceive it. Man is nothing but what he makes himself." He places man in the position of God as the creator of values.

We turn now to consider this atheistic brand of existentialism which Sartre has developed and which is making so strong an appeal to the rising population of France.

Jean-Paul Sartre was born in Paris in 1905 of mixed Protestant and Roman Catholic ancestry. He was left an orphan at an early age, and was brought up at Rochelle by his grandparents. Educated at the High School there, he later studied at the Teachers' Training College of the University of Paris. His undergraduate course was undistinguished, but later he

travelled in Germany as a research student in Philosophy, and there attended lectures under Husserl. He then became a schoolmaster in Paris, and joined up as a private in the army in 1939. He was taken prisoner in 1940, but was released a year later on medical grounds. Like Kierkegaard Sartre never enjoyed robust health. He now taught philosophy in Paris, but under cover of this became a secret leader in the Resistance Movement. After the war he resumed teaching Philosophy, and became famous with the publication of *Being or Nothingness*, a lengthy and difficult book in which he explained his philosophy. He was also the author of numerous novels and plays, in which he became an evangelist of his new gospel of living. This evangelical existentialist fervour has been a mark of his later life, as he believes that he has a valuable message for this age.

Sartre claims to find a place for himself in the direct line of French philosophy. Half-a-century earlier certain philosophers denied the existence of a creating and rewarding God, and substituted the idea of a divinised Nature. According to them, Sartre writes, "God is a useless and expensive hypothesis. We will suppress it, but it is necessary, however, if there is to be a morality, a society, and an ordered world, that certain values should be taken seriously and be regarded as having an *a priori* existence. In other words—and this I think is the tendency of all that in France is called radicalism—nothing will be changed if God does not exist; we shall rediscover the same norms of honesty, progress, and humanism, and we shall have made God an outworn hypothesis which will die quietly of its own accord."[1] Just as Heidegger denied the "parenthesis" of Husserl, Sartre denies the existence of any such norms or values. He thus claims to complete the movement of thought which began with the denial of God.

But I think that the formation of his peculiar philosophy was due even more to the conditions which France found herself subjected to during the occupation. The loss of all that she valued, frustration of life on every side, uncertainty, peril, and the feeling that no one could foretell the result of any action he might take—an environment of this kind, involving especially those active in the resistance, could not but create a re-

[1] Cf. Foulquie, *Existentialism*, p. 82.

action on a mind active in trying to find an ultimate meaning of life lived under such conditions.

Be that as it may be, two things are essential to any understanding of Sartre's philosophy—his denial of the existence of God; and his denial of all morality whatever or at least of all except what we manufacture for ourselves. He is quite frank about it. He writes: "I'm quite vexed that that's the way it is; but if I have discarded God, the Father, there has to be someone to invent values. . . . Life has no meaning *a priori*. Before you come alive you are nothing; life is nothing; it's up to you to give it a meaning, and value is nothing else but the meaning you choose."

Sartre's atheism is not to be described as any mere indifference to a Creator God, or to any decision reached by a rational process. So far as I can find he never tries to justify it; but it seems to have resulted from a free choice arising out of the free project which he found within his being. It is an aggressive atheism, put forward in his writings with an evangelical fervour.

Inward freedom for Sartre is essential to any authentic life. All deliberation is ruled out. We are absolutely free—without any limitation. Here are his words: "Conscious deliberation is always faked. . . . In fact motives and incentives have only the weight of my project, that is the free production of the end in view, and of the known act to be carried out—their partner as it were. When I deliberate, the die is already cast. And if I go on to deliberate, it is simply because it is part of my original project to take into account my motives *by deliberation*, rather than by one or another of the various forms of investigation (by passion, for example, or simply by the act that expresses the organised totality of motives and objectives, as my speech tells me my thought). The decision has already been taken by the time will intervenes; and the latter's function is simply to announce it."[1] Note that Sartre here indicates that human liberty belongs not only to his voluntary acts. His emotions and passions are equally free. "They are, like volitions, certain subjective attitudes by which we attempt to attain the ends laid down in our original liberty." Even the choice of our ends is absolutely free. "It is founded on no reason, for the

[1] J. P. Sartre, *L'être et la néant*, p. 527.

good reason that all reason comes into the world by free choice. We are free therefore absolutely. Everything in our inner life is free."

How then does Sartre establish this hypothesis of an original choice determining thus all our conscious activity? He says it cannot be proved, because it comes before all reflection; but we can have an indirect knowledge of it. The consciousness of choosing ourselves "betrays itself by the double sense of anguish and responsibility". Here again we are up against words used outside of their usual meaning. Ordinarily a man is considered to be responsible for his own acts. Sartre extends this meaning to cover beyond one's personal inner activity acts that are external to him. "I am responsible for everything," he declares, "as deeply responsible for the war as if I had declared it myself."[1] "Job, lamenting on his dunghill 'why died I not from the womb?', chose to be born, because had he not been born, he could not have cursed the day of his birth. In the same way I could not have deplored the defeat of 1940 if it had not taken place. But in deploring it I made it exist for me, and in that sense by my agency." In this way Sartre considers himself to be responsible for the war and in a similar fashion for everything else.

But when we ask to whom are we responsible he has no answer. All the rational presuppositions we ordinarily use to explain our feelings of responsibility have been thrown overboard, and all that is left is the contingent datum of our inner experience. "We do not do as we like," says Sartre, "and yet we are responsible for what we are: that is the plain fact." Well, we cannot explain this fact; it is gratuitous, absurd.

It is not otherwise with anxiety which is also a fundamental fact in existential thinking. Here is how Sartre explains this sense of anguish: "If a man is not, but makes himself, and if in making himself he assumes responsibility for the entire race, if there is no value, nor morality laid down *a priori*, but if in each case we must decide alone, without any basis, without guidance, and yet *for all*, how can we fail to feel anxiety when we have to act? Every one of our acts places at stake the meaning of the world, and the place of man in the universe; by each of them, even when we do not intend it, we constitute a scale of

[1] op. cit., p. 641.

universal values; how can it then be supposed that we will not be seized with fear before such total responsibility?"[1]

We shall see later that Sartre has a cynical estimate of human relationships. In his play *In Camera*, he describes man as wolf to man, and love is but the passion to possess, to make another the instrument of one's freedom. Why then this concern, this anguish for the effect that any act of mine may have on others? The whole conception is one that is incapable of explanation; it is gratuitous, it is absurd.

We have seen that Sartre reacts against the line of philosophy that prevailed from Descartes to Hegel which denied the existence of the thing in itself. But at the same time he is far from thinking of the external world, as the common man thinks of it, as a world of material objects independent of the knowledge we have of them. Sartre distinguishes the world "in itself" from the world as it exists "for me". The world "in itself" is solid, identical with itself, devoid of consciousness. Foulquié describes it as follows: "The 'in itself' is not to be referred to anything other than itself that might be regarded as its beginning or its end, or the plan that it is realising; it has neither reason nor significance. If it is, it is for no reason; its only being is one of fact, without any necessity of being, and without the intervention of a creative power that might explain it; its contingence is absolute, it is a superfluity."[2] What this means is that before human consciousness contacts it and knows it, the world is simply a chaos which is absurd.

In Sartre's novel *The Diary of Antoine Roquentin*, which is thought to be autobiographical, Roquentin tells how he very much liked to pick up chestnuts, old rags and especially papers. One day he saw a "piece of paper lying beside a puddle. The rain had drenched it and twisted it, it was covered with blisters like a burned hand. I bent down, already rejoicing at the touch of the pulp, fresh and tender. . . . I was unable. I stayed bent down for a second. I read 'Dictation—the White Owl'. Then I straightened up, empty-handed. I am no longer free, I can no longer do what I will."

"Objects should not touch, because they are not alive. You use them, put them back in place, you live among them. But

[1] J. P. Sartre in *Action*, 27th Dec. 1944.
[2] op. cit., p. 75.

they touch me, it is unbearable. I am afraid of being in contact with them, as though they were living beasts.

"Now I see: I recall better what I felt the other day at the sea-shore when I held the pebble. It was a sort of sweetish sickness. How unpleasant it was! It came from the stone, I'm sure of it, it passed from the stone to my hand. Yes! That's just it—a sort of nausea in the hand."

This chaotic, this absurd, this viscous quality of the world, "in itself" is the source of nausea, a feeling that Sartre discovers prevailing among men.

This crude, absurd, external world becomes the world "for me", only through my consciousness of it. It builds itself up into a significant intelligible world in phenomena which become the contents of my consciousness. But it is not that rigid reality, the same for everybody, that the ordinary persons thinks it is. Each man creates for himself his own world, and the world he creates varies according to the project he holds forth for himself. "Objects", says Heidegger, "are only tools for us; if they have no relation to our purpose, they remain in the state of crude existence—they are for us as if they did not exist at all. Those we make use of, when they cease to be so used, fall back into the state of crude being, losing their significance. Thus a mountain for a traveller is an obstacle which he seeks to avoid; but for a mountaineer, keen on climbing to the highest summit, it is a piece of good luck which he will go far to find. The only world that exists for me is the work of my consciousness, and its bounds are defined from time to time by the free projects that are inherent in my being. Further it is through this selective consciousness of mine that I become conscious of myself, for an empty consciousness is nothing."

Besides the material objects of this external world, *other people* are encountered by existential man. These only attain for me a veritable existence when they become involved in my projects. Before this they are non-existent for me. Therefore they depend upon me, because they owe their existence to me in the world which is mine. In this respect they are just like other objects in the crude world which present themselves to my consciousness. But there is also a difference. I know that they too have a consciousness as I have, and that they see the world from their own point of view, and have their own pro-

jects in line with which they use all the rest, including me, as their tools. This issues in a state of conflict between me and other people. Each of us, in fact, wishes to exist, and to realise his project of being himself. But by this very fact we enter into and interfere with the projects of other people, and so far as we can, we try to dominate others and make them the tools toward the realisation of our ends. It would take us too far afield to follow Sartre in his intricate analysis of this situation. In his play *In Camera* he develops a cynical estimate of these human relationships, leading up to the grim conclusion: "Hell is the presence of other people." What he means is that other people function only as restraints upon the free expression of one's own individuality. They are rival centres of freedom, so that they can only live at one's expense. "Man is a wolf to man, and even love is but the passion to possess, to make another a tool to use in the interests of one's own freedom."

It follows that existence would seem to us to be the greatest good if there was only one consciousness, but it becomes an evil through the existence of other people. "My original sin is the existence of other people." "Original sin is my entry into a world in which there are other people."[1] For existentialist philosophy original sin is the giving up being an existent in the interest of a care-free, tranquil life. It calls upon men not to stand off from the world but to stand up to it.

The whole tendency of this philosophy reduces man to nothingness, and the life of man to absurdity. Ordinarily we think of man as consisting of body and soul, and of the soul being an entity which conserves the continuity and quality of the being of man. For Sartre the body primarily is part of the crude world "in itself"; but because we are in the world by means of the body, the body is "a permanent structure of my being, and the permanent condition of my consciousness as consciousness of the world." Thus the body is essential to consciousness, "it is what consciousness is: it is indeed not anything other than the body, the rest is non-entity and silence." For Sartre therefore there is no soul or incorporeal spirit. There is only consciousness. He says: "consciousness has nothing substantial about it, it is a pure appearance, in the sense that it only exists in so far as it becomes apparent."[2] "I who hear

[1] *L'être et le néant*, p. 481. [2] op. cit., p. 23.

and foretell am nothing. In that type of being which is called knowing the only being that exists is that which is perpetually here—the known. The knower does not exist, he cannot be grasped, he is nothing more than that cause whereby there is a *being here* of the known, a presence—for of itself the known is neither present nor absent. But this presence is presence to *nothing*.[1] The consciousness through which a world exists for us is merely nothingness."

I do not intend to follow Sartre in his analysis of consciousness in which he discovers a kind of fissure or void in the "being-for-self" of the self. This he describes as the malady of the self. "Human reality is in its nature sick, because it arises into being as perpetually haunted by a totality that it is powerless to be, precisely because it cannot attain to 'being-in-self', without losing itself as 'being-for-self'. Thus it is by nature unhappy consciousness, without any possible escape from the state of unhappiness."

Thus consciousness must not be mistaken for a thing. It is no more than this tense straining towards something that it can never become. Human reality is pure effort to become God, without there being any basis on which to found this effort, and without there being any *thing* that strives in this way.

Human life is therefore absurd, meaningless, and futile. This doctrine would seem to justify suicide as a way out, but Sartre rejects this notion, because, as he says, we can find a satisfaction in the creative effort towards being, and in the fact that we are thus enlarging the universal life of the world, and so developing human nature.

I have not attempted any criticism of Sartre's philosophy, but have merely attempted to give in outline the main features of it. The best criticism I have discovered is to be found in Gabriel Marcel's essay on "Existence and Human Freedom" (in his book *Philosophy of Existence*). But I would remark that it is an incomplete philosophy. It omits reference to the meaning of social and political life, and it knows no morality other than self-created values. For the rest I think that the whole work of Sartre is a good commentary on that type of man whom the Apostle Paul describes as "without God and without hope in the world". It is certainly this type of man that he de-

[1] op. cit., p. 225.

lights to analyse and portray in his numerous novels and plays.

When we read Sartre's novels and plays we cannot but be impressed with the excessive transparence of the worlds and persons whom he describes. His heroes may appeal to us, but they never enchant us. We do not desire to become like to them. His works are in a sense missionary. They are designed to show and to persuade. In the worlds that he depicts there are ambiguities but no mystery. In this respect he parts company with Gabriel Marcel, who would claim that in this fact alone, that there is no mystery, their claim to be true pictures of the situation of man is falsified.

Gabriel Marcel, to whose philosophy we now briefly turn, was early deprived by death of his mother, whose gracious personality however remained with him as a presence ever after. His father originally a Catholic had become an agnostic, but the real influence in his youth was his aunt's who brought him up in a rigid discipline of morality and direction. She was an undogmatic Protestant, who, Marcel says, "had an acute and implacable sense of the absurdity of existence. In the essentially uninhabitable world in which an incomprehensible play of circumstances had caused us to be born, there was only one resource: to forget onself, to strive to lighten the burden of one's fellow sufferers, and to submit to the most severe self-discipline, for outside this there was nothing but licence." This discipline covered his whole school life, of which he writes: "My education roused in me an obscure revolt, not indeed against my family, of whom I was passionately fond, but against what we should now call the system of values ultimately bound up with the desert universe in which I was expected to live." By "the desert universe", Marcel means "that strange duality in my life between a being who had vanished—of whom through shyness we hardly ever spoke . . . and another—dominating, self-assertive and convinced that it was her duty to shed light into the inmost crevices of my mind. I believe now that this disparity, this hidden polarity between the seen and the unseen has played a far greater part in my life and thought than any other influence which may be apparent in my writings."

One other influence of Marcel's youth had a decisive influence on his thinking. In the war of 1914-1918 he served in

the Red Cross in one of its information bureaux. Here he had to "interview relatives of men reported 'missing', and he learned then how poignant a thing it is to be a human being faced with the grim fact of death."

It was from this time that he began to think existentially. He had been brought up in an environment of idealistic philosophy, but from now on we can follow the movements of his mind from his *Journal Metaphysique*, in which from time to time he has jotted down the processes of his thinking. The earlier sections of this Journal are taken up with his reactions against the idealist ways of thought. This was a gradual process. "I was like a man who is irked by a suit of clothes which is too tight for him, and which he is vainly trying to discard."

The second part of this Metaphysical Diary covers the years 1928 to 1933. It contains a reference to his conversion to Christianity. On 28th February 1929 he writes: "I was thinking this afternoon that the only possible victory over time must have fidelity as one of its factors. . . . But one point must be noticed: the fidelity . . . must spring from something that is absolutely given to me. From the very beginning there must be a sense of stewardship: something has been entrusted to us, so that we are not only responsible toward ourselves, but toward an active and superior principle. I at once fear and long to commit myself. But here again I feel that at the very beginning there was something beyond myself—a commitment I accepted after an offer had been made to the most hidden depths of my being. The question is how can I deserve it?"

On 5th March he writes: "I have no more doubts. This morning's happiness is miraculous. For the first time I have clearly experienced *grace*. A terrible thing to say, but so it is. I am hemmed in at last by Christianity—in fathoms deep. Happy to be so! but I will write no more.

"And yet I feel a kind of need to write. Feel I am stammering childishly . . . this is indeed a birth. Everything is different, Now too I can see through my improvisations. A new metaphor, the inverse of the other—a world which was there, entirely present, and at last I can touch it."

It is impossible to set out Marcel's positions in a series of propositions. His meditations in his Journal are discrete, unmethodical, almost interjectional. He takes a concrete situ-

ation, like the relation of myself to others, the relation of my body to myself, fidelity, or hope, or mystery and analyses them, probes them, until as Professor MacKinnon says he "proves the unsuspected profundities of the familiar".

But in the details of these analyses, and as their base one can detect the fundamental existential positions. For example he writes: "A phrase rose to my mind as I watched a dog lying in front of a shop: 'there is one thing that is called living and another called existing'." And existing he defines as the creative privilege of the human person. "He realises himself not so much as a being, as a will to surpass the totality that he is and is not, an actuality in which he indeed feels himself engaged or implicated, but which does not satisfy him: which bears no relation to the aspiration with which he identifies himself. His device is not *sum* but *sursum*.

But where Marcel totally differs from Sartre is in his definition of towards what end does a person surpass himself, and of the source of the direction of the upward surge. He recognises in this aspiration more the action of the absolute Being in which it participates. This brings us into the region of mystery, but for Marcel there is no hard and fast frontier between metaphysics and mystery. But we are not to think that it is through the action of God or in His light, that the type to be realised is revealed; it is our being itself, which by its internal dynamism aspires toward something better of which we have only an explicit knowledge after having attained to it. We are impelled towards it by vital and not intellectual urges. There is here something of that irrationality which characterises existential mentality; but he does not say, "I believe because it is absurd". On the contrary he has faith because it gives a meaning to life and lights up his way. Again unlike Sartre he is more interested in metaphysics than in phenomenology. He believes that through the metaphysical one can reach the meta-metaphysical. What he does is to take certain data, like fidelity or hope, in which one is involved, and to analyse their conditions and implications. "Fidelty can only be shown toward a person, never at all to a notion or an ideal." "An absolute fidelity involves an absolute person." Again, "if I have discerned rightly, there is a close bond of union between hope and a certain affirmation of infinity that is of a transcendent order."

It has been objected to Marcel's philosophy that what he has said "implies an unformulated reference to the data of Christianity, and can only be understood in the light of these data". Marcel would reply that his philosophical notions cannot be said to depend on the data of Christianity and do not presuppose it, for they were formulated before his conversion to Christianity. Moreover Christianity and the facts of the Christian religion are data in the historical situation in which we live. "What appears to me evident is that we cannot reason to-day as though there were not behind us centuries of Christianity." To Marcel the facts of the Christian religion play the role of a fertilising principle, which favours the development of certain ideas, which we might not have conceived without them. Another revealing statement of his is this: "Supernatural life *must*, when all is said and done, find a hold in the natural —which is not to say that it is the flowering of the natural. On the contrary it seems to me that any study of *created* Nature, which is fundamental for the Christian, leads to the conclusion that there is in the depths of Nature, as of reason which is governed by it, a fundamental principle of inadequacy to itself, which is, as it were, a restless anticipation of a different order."

"A philosophy of this kind", he adds, "enables those who have attained to it to perceive the possibility of a revelation in a way which is not open to those who have never ventured beyond the frontiers of the realm of the problematical, and who have therefore never reached the point from which the mystery of being can be seen and recognised."

Finally Marcel declares that his philosophy can be summed up in the words: "ye are not your own". Final insight into the nature of the self is that it is a gift received, a grace shown. "I have not made myself, I have been given to myself, and must remain faithful to the trust."

What a contrast this outlook in life is to the despairing philosophy of Sartre! This latter has been well expressed in these words of an Italian poet, Leopardi, in his short poem *To Himself*:[1]

> Here is your final rest.
> I thought the last illusion would last for ever,
> And it has perished. Perished, oh tired heart,

[1] From the Italian of Leopardi by Henry Read; quoted in *The Listener* of lst June 1950.

And now we know the loved illusion lost,
And after the dead hope, the dead desire.
Be still for ever. You
Have throbbed your fill. And nothing now
Is worth your trembling, earth is not worth your sighs.
Bitterness, vacancy
Is life, and nothing more, in a world of mire.
Lie here and rest. Let the despair that comes
Come finally. Fate never gave
To us, or any of us, more than a death. Now, here,
Curse if you will yourself and nature, curse the ways
Of the hidden ugly Power who orders our common ill,
And the infinite vanity of all our ways.

A STUDY OF MICAH 6.1-8

by The Rev. Professor G. W. ANDERSON

It has often been remarked that the last verse of this passage is an epitome of the teaching of the three great eighth century prophets: the appeal of Amos for justice; Hosea's unfolding of the meaning of *ḥesedh*; Isaiah's summons to the life of humble faith and obedience, which was the outcome of his vision of the holy and living God of Israel. Nowhere is the prophetic message more concisely and powerfully expressed. There are about these words a dignity and comprehensiveness which may easily tempt the modern reader to isolate them from what precedes, and so to miss the ground and the significance of the prophetic appeal. As George Adam Smith wrote many years ago: "Usually it is only the last of the verses upon which the admiration of the reader is bestowed: *What doth the Lord require of thee, O man, but to do justice and love mercy and walk humbly with thy God?* But in truth the rest of the passage differeth not in glory; the wonder of it lies no more in its peroration than in its argument as a whole."[1] The observation is salutary. We have not adequately interpreted these words (v. 8) when we see in them simply an ethical counterblast to a religion whose requirements were exclusively cultic and formal, or when we think of them as merely enunciating an austere but unattainable moral standard, as law without gospel. Nor ought they to be dismissed as an impressive testimony to a faith which we have outgrown. They gather up distinctive and enduring elements in the faith of Israel. In the Old Testament as in the New there is a *kerygma* to be found, and this whole passage is one of its classic expressions.

The central verses of the passage (4 f.) are fundamental to our understanding of the sequence of thought. *I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of bondage; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. O my people, remember what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam*

[1] *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, I (1896), p. 419.

the son of Beor answered him; (remember) from Shittim unto Gilgal,[1] *that ye may know the righteous acts of the Lord.* Much recent study has emphasised afresh the importance of the events of the Exodus for an understanding of Israel's faith and of the faith of the prophets. The view that the distinctive and creative elements in Hebrew religion first appeared in the eighth century is contrary to the plain testimony of the prophets themselves; and the higher we rate their religious insight the less likely we are to discount their views on this matter. It is, of course, in the prophetic literature that these distinctive elements are interpreted and applied with an intellectual and spiritual discernment which is without parallel in the Old Testament. But if the prophets saw God at work in the events of their own time, part of the explanation is that they belonged to a nation which owed its very existence to the redemptive "righteous acts of the Lord" in the field of history. They inherited a tradition which found the norm of the life of their nation in the bond which was then created between God and Israel. Their faith, like the faith of their fathers, was their response to those righteous acts, thought of not only as an isolated intervention centuries earlier, but as continued in accordance with a consistent purpose up to their own day.

When, therefore, the scene is set for God and His people to come to judgment, and the majestic frame of nature is summoned to hear the contending pleas, God's arraignment of His people is not a catalogue of their misdeeds but a reminder of what He has done for them. By a play on words which cannot be adequately reproduced in English (*Wherein have I wearied thee?—hel'ēthīkhā: I brought thee up—he'elītīkhā*) the thought moves swiftly, past any argument which the people might possibly advance, to the recital of the righteous acts. They have sinned against grace; and the truth is driven home by the record of past deliverances. Here, as so often in the prophetic literature (and indeed throughout the Old Testament), sin cannot be reduced to the violation of a moral code.[2] While it is true that "On the whole, the Old Testament puts the emphasis upon sin as rebellion, wilful disobedience to God-given commands",[3] it

[1] The suggested changes in the text both here and at the beginning of the verse are immaterial for the present discussion.

[2] Cf. N. H. Snaith, *The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament* (1944), pp. 64 f.

[3] C. R. North, *The Thought of the Old Testament* (1948), p. 45.

is also true that, before He gave them His commands, God delivered His people, by an act of free grace creating the possibility of the covenant relationship[1]; and sin is, therefore, rebellion against that grace. The same sense of outraged love is present in Isaiah's words (1.2): *Children have I reared and brought up, but as for them, they have rebelled against me*, where all the emphasis is on the unfilial nature of Israel's infidelity. If Micah,[2] unlike Isaiah, does not here use the word "rebellion", with its suggestion of authority flouted, but simply records God's gracious dealings with His people, it is not because he thinks of divine love as passively at the mercy of the sinner. The fact that nature is summoned to the debate is a reminder that the God of grace is also the Creator of the ends of the earth, that those who rebel against Him are pitting themselves against the ground of their being and of all being, and that to those who respond to His promises and obey His commands

> His every word of grace is strong
> As that which built the skies.

It is in response to the recital of God's righteous acts that the people turn in awe and gratitude to the prophet for direction (vv. 6 f.). There is in their question the chastened bewilderment which comes from the vision of a love hitherto unguessed-at or neglected; and the crescendo of these verses echoes their increasing awareness of unworthiness and obligation.[3] The prophet's answer is more than an ethical substitute for the cultus. It is a way of life which derives its character from and finds its incentive in the righteous acts of the Lord. As, in the Decalogue, *Thou shalt* is preceded by *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage*, so here, the ethical norms of prophetic teaching are inseparable from the historical facts of Israel's religion.[4]

To do justly: Justice has often been regarded as a mark of the inadequacy of the Old Testament, both in its concept of God and in its standard of conduct. The austere, divine Judge who exacts the uttermost farthing, and the thus-far-and-no-farther type of justice have been pilloried in many sermons.

[1] Cf. C. R. North, op. cit., p. 48.
[2] I use the name without prejudice to the question of authorship.
[3] Cf. A. Weiser, *Das Buch der zwölf Kleinen Propheten*, I (1949), p. 252. The above was written before Professor Weiser's commentary reached me.
[4] Cf. A. B. Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy* (1904), p. 109.

But to regard *mishpāṭ* (judgment, justice) as no more than even-handed justice is to misunderstand it; though it is an important truth that the Old Testament contains the idea of a justice which shows no respect of persons. *Mishpāṭ* is far wider in its scope; so wide, indeed, that it is difficult to define it with precision. When it is used in any one sense, there may be present over-tones from other uses.[1] In many passages it describes conduct prescribed by use and wont. "Doing *mishpāṭ*" in the present passage has been aptly paraphrased as "doing God's will as it has been made clear in past experience".[2] Use and wont were established by the settlement of individual cases. For instance, by his decision about the division of booty, David established a statute and a *mishpāṭ* in Israel (1 Samuel 30.25). Thus the word has forensic associations; and it can be argued that it is more of a forensic term than righteousness (*tsedheq*, *ts^{e}dhāqāh*).[3] Yet it is not entirely or primarily forensic, as is shown by the use of the verb "to judge" (*shāphaṭ*) and its participle (*shōphēṭ*). The Hebrew judge (*shōphēṭ*) is more than an arbitrator. The judges in the book of that name are deliverers[4]; and within ancient Israel the task of a judge was not simply to "pass judgment" as we use the phrase, but to preserve or restore the healthy life of the community by restraining the wicked and maintaining the cause of the oppressed. That is why the Sodomites accuse Lot of setting himself up as a judge when he tries to protect his guests from their violence (Gen. 19.9)[5]; and the idea is further illustrated by the prophetic exhortations to judge (i.e. succour) the poor, the widow, and the orphan (e.g. Isaiah 1.17, 23); and by the prayer of the Psalmist that God should judge him (e.g. Psalms 7.8, 35.23 f.).

In the present passage *mishpāṭ* is the comprehensive term for the conditions of the covenant, the way of life, which it embodies.[6] When men so act, the life of the community is maintained in vigour and well-being, and the needy and defenceless are cared for. When men disregard this way of life, they infringe the covenant which was established as the sequel of that

[1] Cf. K. Hj. Fahlgren, *S^{e}dāKā, nahestehende und entgegengesetzte Begriffe im Alten Testament* (1932), p. 132.
[2] N. H. Snaith, op. cit., p. 76.
[3] N. H. Snaith, op. cit., ibid.
[4] Cf. L. Köhler, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (1936), p. 14 and n. 18.
[5] Cf. J. Pedersen, *Israel, its Life and Culture*, I-II (E.T. 1926), p. 349.
[6] Cf. J. Lindblom, *Micha literarisch untersucht* (1929), p. 172.

deliverance in which the Judge of all the earth wrought *mishpāṭ* by freeing Israel from bondage.

The same thought, with slightly different emphasis, is implied by the phrase "to love *ḥesedh*". The helpful fidelity within the covenant which the word implies is a reflection of the *ḥesedh* by which Yahweh has maintained the covenant from generation to generation in spite of Israel's infidelity. We are, perhaps, too prone to think of "covenant" simply in terms of conditions and obligations. It is important to remember that "the people with whom one made peace and covenant entered into a psychic community with the other party of the covenant".[1] This sense of psychic community was not peculiar to Israel; but in Israel it was intimately related to the divine creation of the Hebrew amphictyony and its preservation and discipline through the centuries. This was the foundation of the old Israelite solidarity, a solidarity which was expressed in the social structure of early Israelite life. When the great political, economic, and social changes of the monarchical period finally shattered that structure, the tendency was for a new solidarity to be created, partly as an instrument of royal policy, in terms of the new social structure with all its glaring inequalities. The prophets do not seek to put back the hands of the clock; but they appeal for *ḥesedh*, that blend of duty and affection which is the reflection of God's own *ḥesedh* towards His people. However social conditions change, the ground of Israel's solidarity must ever be what He has done for them. They belong to each other because He has made them His own. Thus, *ḥesedh* in man is far more than duty; for it is not the "Stern Daughter of the voice of God", but the response to His gracious and enduring love. As, in the New Testament, if we would understand the meaning of *agape*, we must look at the portrait of Jesus in the Gospel narratives, so, in the Old Testament, the meaning of the *ḥesedh* which God requires of His people is found in the record of His dealings with them. And as it is vain for a man to bestow all his goods to feed the poor, and to give his body to be burned, if he have not *agape*, so, for the Israelite, it is vain to offer thousands of rams, ten thousands of rivers of oil, his firstborn for his transgression, the fruit of his body for the sin of his soul, if he love not *ḥesedh*.

[1] J. Pedersen, op. cit., p. 291.

The concluding phrase of the passage sums up one of the main elements in the teaching of Isaiah. It is, in fact, "Isaiah's appeal for faith differently expressed".[1] Faith is the antithesis of pride; and pride is sin in its most stubborn form. Faith cannot live where a proud and unyielding self-reliance seeks to usurp the place of God. The humiliation of all that is proud and haughty is the natural consequence of failure to recognise and trust the sovereign power of God. So it is that Isaiah's vision of the divine glory is intimately connected both with his appeal for faith and with his prediction that doom will come upon the haughtiness of man.

What is the nature of the humility which is so closely linked with faith? Commentators have found in the story of the call of Jeremiah evidence of a diffidence far removed from Isaiah's "Here am I; send me"; and it is no doubt true that a profound difference of temperament is revealed by the emphasis, on the one hand, on a sense of sin (Isaiah 6.5), and, on the other, on a sense of inadequacy (Jeremiah 1.6). Of far greater importance is the fact that both prophets are carried beyond the sense of human frailty. Isaiah's vision of the divine majesty is accompanied by an experience of the divine grace, so that he is not left a broken man, his moral bankruptcy laid bare, but a forgiven man whose gratitude overflows in service. The sense of the holiness of God and of his own unworthiness might have so humiliated him as to paralyse his will; but grace creates a humility which is linked with a new confidence. We are here very near to that boldness which, in the New Testament, is one of the marks of those who plead not their own merit but that of the incarnate Son of God. In both Testaments the life of faith and obedience is grounded in an awareness of the antecedent acts of divine grace, an awareness which both destroys pride and provides the motive for service.

To walk humbly with God is to live in communion with Him. This needs to be emphasised; for there are some who hold it a weakness in the prophets that they speak as if a man need only know the will of God to be able to perform it. The criticism rests on a misunderstanding if in making it we forget that for the prophets to know God's will is not only to understand and do it but to know *Him*. Behind their profound interpretation

[1] S. Mowinckel, *Jesajadisiplene* (1926), p. 33.

of history, their incisive judgments on national life, their passionate appeals for repentance and righteousness lies their own experience of meeting God face to face. In a sense this is a specifically prophetic experience, through which they receive a knowledge of God which other men do not share. But, ideally, all men can know God in this way. What has come to the prophets is not an esoteric mystical experience reserved for a select few, but is open to all. "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets" hints at a possibility which the prophets themselves take for granted.[1]

Thus, to walk with God is both to have communion with Him and to serve Him. Here, in this classical expression of the prophetic *kerygma*, the historical foundation of Israel's religion is not opposed to the present action of God in the life of the believer, but inseparably linked with it. He who has seen in the history of God's people and in his own life the tokens of the divine *mishpāṭ* and *ḥesedh* has found there the pattern alike of divine demand and divine succour, and can do no other than walk patiently in the ways of humble obedience. That here, as so often in the Old Testament, this is expressed in terms of demand ("What doth the Lord require of thee . . . ?") is a reminder that in the prophetic experience "we see, not the anchoring of the values of human personality in the divine . . . but the confrontation of the human personality by the divine and the determination of the human by the divine will".[2]

[1] Cf. S. Mowinckel's fine study, *Die Erkenntnis Gottes bei den Alttestamentlichen Profeten* (1941).

[2] N. W. Porteous in *Record and Revelation* (1938), p. 246.

BOOK REVIEWS

Baptism in the New Testament. By Oscar Cullmann. S.C.M. Press. 6s.

The S.C.M. Press is to be congratulated on providing in their Studies in Biblical Theology a form of theological literature in which this country has long lagged behind the Continent. They are also to be congratulated for launching it with a contribution as stimulating and as excellent as this translation of Professor Cullmann's monograph.

The occasion which provoked Cullmann's essay was Karl Barth's *Teaching of the Church regarding Baptism* which, as he himself says, measuring his words, "is in fact the most serious challenge to infant Baptism which has ever been offered". But, very wisely, he refuses to become involved in purely negative polemic. Instead, he sets out to state afresh the N.T. basis for the doctrine of baptism, and has succeeded in a short compass in producing something which in its own right is a notable contribution to the theological understanding of the subject.

The first chapter deals with the Foundation of Baptism. Like Barth, Cullmann attaches great importance to Jesus' own baptism as the true "institution" of the Christian rite. Or, rather, he sees this event, as it were, as its foreordination, just as Dom Gregory Dix has insisted that the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper must be viewed as anticipating its real inauguration on the Cross. The water baptism in Jordan which Jesus underwent as the Servant of God *for the whole people* (cf. *πληρῶσαι πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην* Matt. 3.15; *ἅπαντα τὸν λαόν* Luke 3.21) prefigured the general baptism which He undertook for all men on Calvary. This interpretation of the Cross is firmly grounded in Jesus' own understanding of His death as a baptism (Mark 10.38; Luke 12.50) which is both representative (Mark 10.39) and vicarious (Mark 10.45). In view of what the writer says elsewhere it is surprising that he does not make more in this connexion of Paul's direct description of the Cross as "the circumcision of Christ" (Col. 2.11) and of John's finding in the blood and water that issued from the body of the Crucified (John 19.34) the true "institution" of the eucharist and baptism.

The foundation of the Christian doctrine of baptism is that in the general baptism of Golgotha all men have already been bap-

tised. This is a thoroughly Maurician theology. It is only within this context that baptism into the Church as the Body of Christ can be understood. What Church baptism brings about is entry into "the inner circle" of the *regnum Christi*, namely, the Israel of God, through whom the knowledge and the effects of the universal salvation already wrought are to be communicated to all men. Unfortunately, at this point Cullmann's argument is spoilt by the gratuitous assertion that the Church is simply the *earthly* Body of Christ (pp. 34, 50), with the rider that the baptism of those about to die is meaningless. This position he takes over from his earlier essay, *Königsherrschaft Christi und Kirche im N.T.*, but he fails there to adduce a single text in support of it. Rather, one must say that membership of the Church is bounded, not by the moment of a man's death (that is to fall into attributing, with Hellenic theology, an overriding significance to the hour of death of which the N.T. knows nothing), but by the Day of the Parousia. The period of the Sacraments lies between the Cross and the Messianic Banquet, just as the water and manna of the old covenant lay between the crossing of the Red Sea and the milk and honey of the Promised Land (1 Cor. 10.1 ff.). Cullmann himself in his *Christus und die Zeit* stresses the difference for those who die possessing the earnest of the Spirit in the Body of Christ. Moreover, the obscure practice of Baptism for the dead (cf. 1 Cor. 15.29) is at any rate evidence that the sphere of baptism was not regarded as limited to this "mortal life" (p. 48). There may be good reasons for questioning the practice of indiscriminate emergency baptism, but this is not one.

It is when he comes on to the meaning of baptism as acceptance into the Body of Christ that Cullmann really crosses swords with Barth. And at this point the victory must be adjudged to go to Cullmann. Barth succeeds in showing Calvin inconsistent, in that from his doctrine of baptism as the *cognitio salutis* infant baptism cannot logically follow. But Cullmann succeeds in showing both Calvin and Barth unscriptural. There is no N.T. evidence for thinking that the *cognitio*, namely the communication to the individual of the *knowledge* of God's saving act and its reception by faith, is the constitutive element in baptism. Barth talks several times of baptism as a man's entry into the "divine certainty" that he is saved. But, as Cullmann says, what the great N.T. texts on baptism declare is that at that moment "God sets a man within, *not merely informs him that He sets him within*, the Body of Christ" (p. 31). Baptism is genuinely a *causa*, not merely a *cognitio*; or, as the XXXIX Articles express it, an "effectual sign" of regeneration, whereby, "as by an instrument", men are "grafted into the Church". Baptism extends into the time of the Church and for the individual that same wholly

prevenient grace that has already "entirely without our co-operation, and even without our faith" (p. 23), won victory for all on Good Friday and Easter Day.

This leads Cullmann on to the relation of baptism to faith. His position is that baptism is an absolutely unconditional prevenient act of God in Christ, demanding faith only as response. In most of the N.T. instances of its administration, to be sure, a confession of faith is demanded prior to baptism; but this is required in no way as a condition of God's acting, but simply as "a sign for the Church and a criterion to baptised adults of their being chosen" (p. 50). In the case of infants, and in the case of "households" (e.g. of the Philippian gaoler), this sign is supplied by the natural solidarity of family life. The confession of faith before baptism belongs to the "ordering" not to the essence of baptism, and, in the absence of a Christian home, it is a "divine indication", though not of course a guarantee, of that "later faith which is decisive" (pp. 51-2).

On the essential point here Cullmann is surely right, but again he spoils his case by exaggeration. The parallel which he himself draws with the miracles of Christ (pp. 54-5) indicates where he oversimplifies. In the ministry of Jesus the powers of the age to come were released, but in the absence of faith they could not take effect in the life of an individual: "He could do no mighty work there because of their unbelief." In His death and resurrection these same powers have been made available to all men in the baptism of Calvary; but they can operate personally and savingly in any individual only where unbelief is not preventing it. There must be a difference at this point between the general baptism, and the special if the Church is distinguished, as Cullmann holds, as that part of the *regnum Christi* where the kingship of the risen Lord is *acknowledged*. The formula τί κωλύει; which Cullmann detects in the primitive baptism narratives itself points to the recognition that there *is* a hindrance to be removed before the sacrament can be administered. The barrier may not lie in the individual himself, and the faith of family or friends may be, as in several of the miracles of healing and in all those of raising from the dead, that which allows the life-giving power of God to enter savingly into the situation. In the case of infants it is in fact the religion or irreligion of the home which will permit or exclude the personal reception of Christ which the covenant status is initiating. What is demanded before infant baptism is not merely (what Cullmann rightly requires for all baptism) the faith of the congregation which enables it to act as the organ of the Holy Spirit, but the promise by sponsors to remove all hindrance of unbelief or action from the way of the baptised. This is not a vicarious faith in the sense of committing the infant in

advance to a personal decision for Christ (which is immoral, despite its hoary ecclesiastical tradition); but it is an undertaking on behalf of the infant to lift the barrier to covenant status which in an adult would require his own act of acceptance.

When he actually comes to discussing infant baptism Cullmann insists strongly that the N.T. must be used as a source book of doctrine not of precedents. He admits that the N.T. offers no unequivocal instance of the practice of infant baptism. But he claims that it does something much more important: it provides a doctrine of baptism which makes its administration to infants thoroughly natural, and, indeed, in face of which an express N.T. prohibition would be needed to make us doubt that it was so administered. Apart from his stress on the prevenient nature of baptism, he substantiates this largely by the analogy from Jewish proselyte baptism and circumcision.

He draws attention to the fact that two quite different demands for infant baptism must have presented themselves to the early Church. There were (*a*) the children included in the households of those who came over to Christianity (in the parallel case of Judaism these were subjected along with their parents to proselyte baptism); and (*b*) children born to parents already in the Faith (in Judaism these were not baptised). On this analogy he interprets 1 Cor. 7.14 as meaning that children born to a Christian parent are already "holy" by natural solidarity of birth, baptism being dispensed with. If this were so, he would then be committed to the paradoxical situation of finally disproving infant baptism, and indeed any baptism, except in the case of outside converts to the Faith! He admits, somewhat ingenuously, that this "could not be the last word in primitive Christianity" (p. 64); but there is no evidence within the N.T. or out of it for any change of attitude on something so fundamental. But, in truth, he has simply made the difficulty for himself.

He says that "Christians could not be content with a renunciation of Baptism on analogy with proselyte Baptism, just because Christian Baptism implies not only the fulfilment of Jewish purification baptism but also of circumcision" (p. 64). With regard to circumcision more will be said in a minute. But it may be questioned whether in fact *Christian* baptism, as opposed to John's baptism, was a fulfilment, except in external form, of proselyte baptism at all.

Cullmann fails to distinguish sufficiently the baptism of John from post-pentecostal Christian baptism. There is a consistent contrast made within the N.T. between John's baptism as being of or unto repentance (Acts 13.24, 19.4, Matt. 3.11) with a view to the

remission of sins (Mark 1.4), and Christian baptism as that which actually effects this remission (Acts 2.38, 22.16). John's baptism therefore remains a symbol (albeit an effective symbol) of a human turning to God; Christ's is an instrument of God's gracious action upon men. This contract is the same as that between John's as a baptism "with water" (where the matter is "of the earth") and Christian baptism "with the Holy Spirit" (the renewing power of God "coming down from heaven"; cf. Mark 11.30, which may represent the Church's hesitation about the difference, and John 3 which is its theological resolution). This distinction Cullmann obscures by saying that the baptism administered by John, like that of the Apostles, "also resulted in forgiveness of sins" (p. 9) and still more when he speaks of John's baptism affording "*reception* into the divine covenant" (p. 64; italics his) and taking over "the function . . . of circumcision" (ibid.).

The truth is that John's baptism fulfilled the true meaning of the Jewish purification rite by treating all men, whether Jew or Gentile, as in equal need of moral cleansing in the sight of God; but it initiated into no covenant. Christian baptism, on the other hand, is essentially the fulfilment of circumcision (and not, directly, of proselyte baptism). It supervenes as the mark of entry into the New Covenant, ratified in "the circumcision of Christ" on the Cross. On this analogy, the children spoken of in 1 Cor. 7.14 as ἅγια (i.e. within the Holy People) would certainly have been baptised, as, under Judaism, they would certainly have been circumcised. From this fulfilment of circumcision, which Cullmann elaborates excellently, though he confuses it with that of proselyte baptism, the line of advance to infant baptism within the Church was direct and inevitable.

One cannot end without again commending Professor Cullmann's study as a profoundly stimulating essay in Biblical theology. As in all his writings, indeed, one detects an enthusiasm which sometimes reads more into a text than it will bear (e.g., his finding in Heb. 6.6 an instance of baptism thought of as crucifixion; or his deduction from 1 Cor. 7.14 that "the question of the 'holiness' of children was always arising for the early Christians", whereas actually Paul here uses this "holiness" as the one unquestioned fact from which to settle quite a different problem). Again, there is the rather disquieting way in which he can discuss, for instance, the narratives of the baptism of Jesus as though the form-critics had never lived. In this respect the careful scholarship of Mr Flemington's book on *The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism* can supply a useful corrective. Moreover, when both Barth and Cullmann can debate the whole N.T. teaching on baptism virtually without a reference to the laying

on of hands, it is evident that recent Anglican discussion of this subject has not been superfluous.

But, when all is said, it is difficult to believe that anyone could be made to think more deeply and searchingly about the real meaning of Christian baptism than by going to school with Barth and Cullmann. It will indeed be a thousand pities if Cullmann is now regarded as having disposed of Barth. On most issues he has done —and has intended to do—nothing of the sort. Rather, the knowledge that he has corrected the major point at which Barth is untrue to the N.T. should drive people back to receive the great many other things which Barth says both biblically and with real magnificence.

J. A. T. Robinson

Hat die Urkirche die Kindertaufe geübt? and *Die Wiederentdeckung von Bethesda.* By Joachim Jeremias. Vandenhoek and Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1949.

Before Karl Barth reopened the question of baptism from a dogmatic point of view a discussion was going on in the pages of learned journals on the evidence for child and infant baptism in the early Church. In the first of these short studies Dr Jeremias begins with a review of the course of the debate from its inception in 1928 when the widely accepted view that infant baptism arose in the second century was challenged by Professor Oepke. This opening survey covers the literature on the subject up to the present time and shows a tendency on the part of the majority of scholars to accept an early date for the practice of baptising children, if not infants. Dr Jeremias takes up the question at that point and draws evidence from various sources to throw fresh light on the practice of the early Church. These sources are—the practice in proselyte baptism existing prior to the time of Christ, the evidence of the New Testament itself and also that of the Fathers and of burial inscriptions for the practice of the Church in the first three centuries.

Quoting evidence from Billerbeck Dr Jeremias gives his judgment, supported by many considerable scholars, that proselyte baptism was practised before Christian times. It appears that the view of the school of Hillel that this baptism should follow circumcision after an interval of seven days, had been accepted by this time. As to the baptism of children, those born before the conversion of their parents were baptised though in the case of boys the rite of circumcision preceded baptism. For girls and women baptism was the rite of admission into Judaism. Rabbinic opinions are quoted to show that this baptism was more than a ritual purification and

was associated with theological conception of a new birth and new life. Thus the fact of the baptism of children and in certain circumstances of infants is established. At a later date a scripture basis was found for this proselyte baptism by a rabbinic exegesis of Numbers 15.14: "As ye do so shall he (the stranger) do", and this in its turn entailed the doctrine of the baptism of the first generation of Irsaelites in the wilderness, which was an accepted tradition—based on an exegesis of Exodus 24.8—by the time of Gamaliel, at whose feet Paul sat. It is this tradition that Paul is referring to in 1 Corinthians 10.1-2.

The transition from the baptism of proselytes—that is of non-Israelites—to that of Israelites, which marks the baptism of John the Baptist, is accounted for by the view, widespread in Israel, that the period of the wilderness wanderings was typical of what would happen in the Messianic age. We can think of Hosea 2.14-16 in this connexion and for New Testament times Dr Jeremias points to abundant New Testament evidence for this belief. All the patterns of the wilderness period are there. There is reference to "tabernacles", "manna", "Sinai", "Zion", "the Camp", and not least, John's choice of the wilderness for the scene of his activity. Thus in following the pattern of the wilderness John also applied to Jews the rite used for Gentiles. For the last times had come, as Ezekiel (36.25) had prophesied: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you . . . and ye shall be clean." Apart altogether from the question of infant baptism this point is important as showing that baptism, like the Lord's Supper, has a strong eschatological reference. For the present question, however, this provides the link between proselyte baptism and Christian baptism through the baptism of John. Given this lineal descent it seems reasonable to suppose that the conditions of administration would be the same in Christian as in proselyte baptism, as generally speaking the externals of religion perpetuate themselves with a momentum of their own though the inner meaning changes. This would mean in the present case that in the Christian Church also children, including infants of heathen, were baptised at the conversion of their parents to Christianity.

In dealing with the New Testament evidence Dr Jeremias points out that as the missionary situation is central for the New Testament it is the conversion and baptism of adults that is in the foreground. There is, however, evidence for the baptism of children though it is important to make a distinction between the baptism of children at the conversion of parents and that of children born in Christian homes. For the former his case rests on the interpretation of such phrases as "all his house" to be inclusive of children and infants and the weight of the antique conception of the solidarity of the

family. This argument is strengthened by a short addendum to the book referring to evidence drawn from the Old Testament by Professor E. Stauffer on the use of the expression "house" (*beth*) which has a ritual significance, particularly in respect of children, that has passed into the New Testament usage. This has influenced the *oikos*-formula used in baptism. That this was the practice for Jewish as well as Gentile families at conversion can be concluded from the improbability of different practices in any one local church and the direct evidence of Acts 2.38 ff.: "Repent and be baptised . . . for the promise is to you and to your children and to all who are afar off, as many as call on the name of the Lord." The children, here, cannot, in view of the eschatological sense of the passage, be taken as a future generation. They are the living sons and daughters of the converted. Dr Jeremias finds in this passage also direct evidence of the baptism of children, including infants, in Apostolic times.

Before examining the New Testament evidence for the baptism of children born to Christian parents Dr Jeremias surveys the practice of the Church in the first three centuries, so far as it can be learned from the Fathers and inscriptions. There is no evidence of any dispute about it, as one would expect were it a late innovation, and it is regarded as a universally accepted custom going back to Apostolic times. There is no suggestion that it was ever postponed, and burial inscriptions imply that it was administered to infants who were not expected to live. The question is, can a probable date be fixed for the commencement of the practice? The crucial passage is Paul's decision on mixed marriages in 1 Cor. 7.11-16. Paul assumes that the principle that the children of believers are holy applies to the whole Christian community ("As it is your children are holy", 1 Cor. 7.14 *c*) and applies it to mixed marriages. One holy member sanctifies the family. In this passage the holiness of children is referred not to baptism but, as in the parallel case of proselyte baptism, to descent from a believing parent. This seems to require the conclusion that the practice of baptising children was unknown to Paul. Such a decision would, however, be premature. The principle of the holiness of children which derives ultimately from proselyte baptism does not apply in the case of children born before the conversion of their parents. On the analogy of proselyte baptism the passage in 1 Cor. 7.14 *c* only admits the conclusion that children born of Christian parents were not baptised at Corinth in 54 A.D.

Traces of an early transition to the baptism of children born of Christian parents appear according to Dr Jeremias in the reference to baptism as Christian circumcision (Col. 2.11) and the accusation against Paul (Acts 21.21) that he was breaking down Jewish customs

and discouraging circumcision. He advances the hypothesis that in speaking of Christian circumcision Paul was answering these charges and putting forward baptism as a substitute for circumcision. This is attractive, but extremely conjectural. Greater weight may be attached to the evidence drawn from Mark 10.13-16 and parallels, the blessing of children by Jesus. This passage appears to be full of traces of baptismal terminology. Not only the word *Koluein* as Cullmann has already suggested, but the reference to repentance and receiving the Kingdom in Mark 10.15 and parallels, suggests a baptismal formula. Throughout the matter is linked up with the attitude of the Church to children. In addition Dr Jeremias connects the situation as described in Mark with a Jewish custom of bringing children to a scribe for his blessing on the eve of the day of atonement. Here again there is a link with repentance and children. Further, in the Lucan parallel to Mark, *paidia*, children, has become *brephe*, babes. These indirect references to baptism and children afford ground for the conclusion that when the Gospel of Mark was composed it was the custom in Rome to baptise the children of Christian parents. Using data drawn from the Martyrdom of Polycarp and Justin's Apology about the age of Polycarp and others reckoned according to their years of service as Christians, Dr Jeremias ventures to date the introduction of general infant baptism some time between 60 and 70 A.D.

A great deal of the evidence for infant baptism is indirect but it all points one way and the effect is cumulative. It is indeed remarkable as Dr Jeremias points out that there is no record of controversy on the question until late, nor any mention of two classes of Christians in the early Church—the baptised and the unbaptised.

Dr Jeremias has made out a most impressive case for the acceptance by the Church of child and infant baptism at an early date, almost as a matter of course, and, although ancient custom does not justify anything, the protagonists of infant baptism will doubtless feel their hand strengthened by the moral support of the early Church. Dr Jeremias marshals his evidence with great skill and carries the reader with him through the patient documentation and examination of rabbinical, New Testament and patristic evidence, imparting some of his own enthusiasm for the quest. References for all quotations are carefully given and clear summings up at each stage of the argument keep the main points in view. The book is well up to Dr Jeremias' standard of careful and cautious scholarship and at the end there is a useful bibliography of literature on the subject by scholars of all nations, British, French and American as well as German.

In the second short study Dr Jeremias is concerned with the pool of Bethesda, or as he would rather put it "the (place) called Bethesda at the Sheep Pool". Following old tradition he links *probatike* to *kolumbethra* in John 5.2 and reads the latter in the dative instead of the nominative. It must be admitted that the name Bethesda suits a building better than a pool, for *beth* means house. This structure with its five porticoes (John 5.2) is an important part of the evidence. According to Dr Jeremias it disqualifies the Pool of Siloam from being the same place under another name, for the building there had only four porticoes. The local Jerusalem tradition witnessed in Eusebius, Cyril and the Pilgrim of Bordeaux supports this with its constant reference to the five porticoes and its placing of the pool north of the Temple, near the gate leading to the Kidron valley. Dr Jeremias traces the history of the tradition up to the capture of Jerusalem by the Mohammedans in 1187 when the site began to get buried under rubble, and later built over. About this time another pool north of the Temple wall won the reputation of being Bethesda.

The concluding pages of the book give the confirmation of this evidence of the Gospel and ancient tradition by the excavations on the site of the Basilica of St. Anna built near the pool in crusading times. The history of the excavations begins with the discovery (1852) of two cisterns which were at first thought to be twin pools, and proceeds to the discovery of two larger pools on either side of the cisterns revealing a considerable piece of ornamental water which experts date about the time of Herod the Great. Dr Jeremias surmises that a simpler pool known as the Sheep Pool was its predecessor. The evidence adduced by Dr. Jeremias makes it probable that the twin pools revealed by these excavations are the place referred to in John 5.2, where the structure—Bethesda—with five porticoes stood. This probability amounts almost to a certainty in view of the evidence in ancient tradition that one of the porticoes ran through the middle of the pool, that is to say, along the dividing wall between the two basins, the others running round the outside. It was in the centre portico that the sick lay waiting the movement of the water. Excavations have not yet proceeded far enough to reveal the cause of the disturbance of the water, but Dr Jeremias is inclined to think that an investigation of the plumbing installation will yield an explanation—a somewhat prosaic conclusion!

As in the study on baptism, Dr Jeremias here also handles with the ease of a master the various strands of evidence, text-critical, historical and archaeological so that a comparative tyro may follow the line of argument—the wayfarers, though fools, shall not err therein. Copious notes and references are given. If Dr Jeremias'

arguments find general acceptance, the translators of our projected new Version of the Bible will read here "Bethesda" and not "Bethzatha" as Moffatt and the American Revised Standard Edition do, and his claim that archaeology confirms the topography of the Fourth Gospel will be justified.

J. C. Campbell

The True Nature of a Gospel Church. By John Owen. Abridged and edited by John Huxtable, M.A. Jas. Clarke. 5s.

Churchmen of all persuasions who are concerned to think through the problem of the Church and its unity will be grateful to Mr Huxtable for making available, in a conveniently concise form, this important statement of Congregationalist churchmanship. Congregationalists are not among the most numerous of the types of Christians in the world to-day, but their doctrines have deeply affected the history of the Church both in England and America; and their principles have an importance out of all proportion to the numbers of their adherents in a time when the growth of the Ecumenical Movement has forced upon us all the question as to the nature of the union or communion that ought to exist between churches. What Owen has to say affects especially three problems, which are very much relevant to our contemporary ecclesiastical situation.

Perhaps the most basic problem is that of the being of the Church itself. No serious churchman, and certainly no representative Congregationalist, has ever held that the Church is something we make ourselves. But granted that, where can we find "the Church"? Can we find it, *in its fulness*, in a local Christian community? Or is it inevitable that we should conclude that local churches are always defective in their being as churches, and that therefore we have to look for the fulness of the Church to some visible, universal society with centralised and authorised and authenticated life—as the Romans and the Orthodox would hold? Or is the fulness of church life to be found in a union of churches held together by a common confession of faith? Owen puts the case for the Congregationalist view—that the fulness of life that Christ offers, promises, and thereby gives to the Church, is to be found in the local church. In this Owen, and Congregationalists generally believe that they are thinking of, and using, the word "church" in the same way as the New Testament—"the Church of God in Corinth". And a modern Congregationalist would press this question upon ecumenists and non-ecumenists alike: Does Christ promise the fulness of His life to the Church? Does He keep this promise? Does Christ give Himself fully

to, or keep some of Himself back from, the local church? If He gives Himself fully, what more is needed to bring the fulness of church life? *Ubi Christus, ibi ecclesia.* Can any churchman of any confession avoid this searching question—if Christ gives Himself to any local church, if He is really its hidden life, what more does it need, if anything, to make it a church?

But neither Owen nor his modern successors would want to leave matters there. Each separate church may possess the fulness of church life, but that is because Christ bestows it. But Christ gives that fulness of life in Himself to every local church, and there is in consequence a unity of churches in Christ which is as significant as their distinctness, indeed is bound up with their distinctness. No church can really live "in Christ", have its life in Him, and be indifferent to other churches, whether churches of its own or some other denomination. Only in communion can a church be truly a gospel church, truly Catholic. Moreover there are some other considerations. Part of the meaning of God's provision of a church in His Son is the fact that I cannot achieve, or be enabled to achieve a full Christian life in solitude or isolation. I need the stimulus, the encouragement, the love and the disciplines of family and social life, as well as life in the Church if I am to attain any considerable Christian stature. The same is true of churches. By itself a local church is relatively weak. It is open to many dangers that the Church in communion with other churches much more easily avoids—the dominance of party interests, the inroads of heresy and unbelief, and so on. In communion with each other, in the exercise of love, encouragement, worship and discipline in common, Christ can and does keep His churches more pure. That is not to say that communion of churches is simply a disciplinary expedient; it is that, but it is that only because Christ is the real union of the life of them all.

Another consequence of Owen's fundamental position lies in his doctrine about the proper seal of authority in the Church. He rejects entirely any division between "those who command" and "those who obey". He is clear that authority belongs to Christ alone, who has been given to the *Church* to be "head over all things". It is the whole Church, therefore, that now exercises power in administering sacraments, in preaching the Word, in practising discipline. The "authority" of Ministers derives from this power of Christ in the Church, and is, precisely, ministerial and not magisterial authority. Ministers are not to be obeyed; they are to call for obedience to Christ. If they make an "authoritative declaration" they must do so in Christ's name, and in that name alone the Church must accept it. So Owen cuts across the familiar distinction between "clergy

and laity" and between "hierarchy and people". The Church is the Minister, for Christ is in the Church; the Church is the hierarch, for its sole ruler is Christ.

The last point is thus the nature of the authority that is exercised in the Church. Authority, says Owen, is organical and ministerial, not autocratical and magisterial. It is persuasive, not coercive. The one authority is God's Word, Jesus Christ our Lord. Any exercise of authority in the Church has to be ministered by men, and for this reason may fail to be what Christ intends. Authority is valid only when it properly embodies the authority of the Word, and so can appeal to the Word for its authentication in use. Such authority is to be used, both within a local church, and in the communion of churches as they minister to each other. Officers in a church and churches in a communion of churches appeal to the same authority, and exercise it in the same way—by appeal to its deriving from and representing the authority of the Word. Neither Church Office nor Synod can rightly say "you must do this"; nor can a church member or a particular church reply "I will obey". There must be on the one hand an honest appeal to the authority of the Word, and on the other a conscious acceptance of it.

There is much else that Owen considers. But this is enough to indicate that what he has to say is right in the heart of much contemporary discussion about the Church. Sometimes it has seemed, indeed, to a Congregationalist, that if there be any theological formulation of the nature of the World Council of Churches and the "authority" it possesses, or ought to possess, this book of John Owen, in its chapter on "The Communion of Churches" provides it. Certainly much that seems strange to some churchmen in the actions and procedures of the World Council and its various organisations, is a matter of real homeliness to a Congregationalist!

The reviewer has one chief regret about Mr Huxtable's work. There is provided in the volume a short memoir of Owen; but it says all too little, especially about Owen's exercise of his own churchmanship. It appears that there was an Independent Congregation in Oxford in his day, and it would have been interesting to know whether there or elsewhere these principles of Congregationalist high churchmanship were ever put into practice. But perhaps Mr Huxtable will tell us that in another book?

JOHN MARSH

Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch. By MARTIN NOTH. W. Kohlhammer Verlag, Stuttgart, 1948. 288 pp. DM. 21.00.

DURING the past two decades attention has been increasingly drawn to the oral tradition behind the Pentateuchal documents, and it is

not infrequently said that the next stage of criticism will be concerned with the elucidation of the pre-literary sources. The assumption underlying this is that documentary criticism has gone as far as it very well can, and that its general conclusions are now sufficiently established, though of course there will always be room for adjustment of details.

In this important but difficult book Professor Noth has set himself the task of unravelling the history of the oral tradition of which the documents J, E, and P, are the final precipitate. It was written while Germany was isolated from the rest of the learned world, and one of the books which Noth says in his Preface that he has not read is Ivan Engnell's *Gamla Testamentet, en traditionshistorisk inledning I* (1945), in which a broadside attack is made upon the whole literary-critical position and method. Engnell would sweep aside "Wellhausenism" completely, and in one passage he appears to regard Noth as in some measure an ally. It is therefore relevant to give some account of Noth's position *vis-à-vis* the documentary hypothesis, because the documentary hypothesis is for him a necessary precedent to any attempt to penetrate to the ultimate oral sources.

In an earlier work[1] Noth detached Deuteronomy altogether from the Pentateuch—a proceeding which Engnell took up with enthusiasm—asserting that there was never a "Hexateuch", and that the Pentateuch originally contained only Genesis-Numbers together with some portions of Deut. 31-34. The sources J, E, and P, do not extend beyond this truncated Pentateuch. For the rest, Noth's Pentateuchal criticism is orthodox enough. P was a story-work, not a mere "tradent" (Engnell). Into it as a framework the other documents were fitted, and Noth is sceptical of von Rad's attempt to separate out two parallel strands in it. E was originally a complete document, not, as Volz and Rudolph have attempted to demonstrate, so much expansion or revision of J. Nor does Noth find any place for Eissfeldt's L. He thinks there must have been a common *Grundlage* (G) for J and E, but leaves open the question whether this ever existed in written or only in oral form. What Noth, when he reads it, will make of Engnell's attempt to account for the "Tetrateuch" entirely in categories of oral tradition, is hardly in doubt. It seems certain that he will insist on documentary analysis as a *sine qua non* for any hopeful attempt to deal with the history of oral tradition. Moreover, the Uppsala scholars can hardly rest finally content with an unco-ordinate mass of oral tradition. They will have to go on to ask the kinds of questions to which Noth in this book addresses himself.

With regard to oral tradition, which is the main concern of the

[1] *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*, I (1943).

book, Noth volunteers that much must remain problematical, and that we must sometimes be content to ask the right questions, even though the answers to them may be very hypothetical. The main themes of the tradition were the Exodus from Egypt—this was primary and to a large extent determinative of the rest—the entry into the Promised Land, the promises to the Patriarchs, the guidance through the desert, and the revelation at Sinai. They took shape between the conquest and the beginnings of the monarchy, largely in association with the cultus. The main themes were filled out with folk-stories about such incidents as the Egyptian plagues, the adventures of the ancestors (Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham, the development being in that order), the perils of the wilderness, the murmurings of the people, etc. Much of what is reported was imaginative development from historical events the details of which are now hardly recoverable, and what we know of the fortunes of individuals is really very little. Even Moses is a much more shadowy figure than has latterly been assumed.

So far as actual "history" is concerned, the results of Noth's study are meagre, and his chief positive conclusion appears to be that the tradition-history of the Pentateuch was itself an important, perhaps the most important, fact in the early history of Israel. If this should seem disappointing, it nevertheless accords with a valid historical principle. One of Wheeler Robinson's dicta was that "there are no bare facts for the historian". The "facts" of history are born of the interpretation of "events" which themselves may even be obscured by the faith of the interpreter. The interpretation of history is as potent a force in the life of a nation as the "history" itself; sometimes even more potent. It is quite certain that Hebrew religion had its roots in history, particularly in the "event" of the Exodus. But when the Exodus took place, and how, and where the sacred mountain was at which the covenant between Yahweh and Israel was made, and what the terms of the covenant were, we do not know for certain, and perhaps never shall know. This is because religion, though it is rooted in history, by its very nature passes into the realm of the transcendental, and as faith broods upon the creative events it may so transfigure them that their exact original lineaments are in time no longer discernible. For example much of what is recorded of the wilderness wanderings may be what sober historians would call romancing. But the Hebrew religious genius made of it a story which is astonishingly true of the pilgrimage of the human soul through the wilderness of this world, and of the age-long pilgrimage of the Church, with its strange mixture of the sordid and the sublime. It may even be that Engnell is fundamentally right when he seems to say that we cannot have

pure history but must be content with the history of tradition. Nevertheless, before we accept that conclusion—a conclusion which would not be altogether desolating—it is only reasonable that we should make trial of attempts like this of Noth to penetrate to the history that lies behind the tradition.

C. R. North

The Mosaic Tradition. By F. V. Winnett. Toronto University Press; London, Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1949. 28s.

One of the signs of Old Testament scholarship to-day is the renewed attention that is being given to Pentateuchal criticism. The Wellhausen documentary hypothesis has had a long innings, but scholar after scholar, in recent years, has found it inadequate. Some have found reason to believe that the documentary analysis must be carried further and have spoken of J_1, J_2, J_3, etc.; Eissfeldt has argued for the existence of an L (Lay) document, Pfeiffer of an S (Seirite) and Morgenstern of a K (Kenite). Thus the documentary hypothesis increasingly takes on the appearance of a fragmentary hypothesis, and conservative scholars have sought to find some encouragement in this for their own views. It must, indeed, be admitted that when the documentary hypothesis is applied to certain parts of the Pentateuch, the allocation of verses and even phrases, to the different documents, tends to give the impression that the Pentateuchal editors must have used a scissors-and-paste method of compilation which is not easily accepted. There are many scholars today who are ready to believe that there never was a P document, although they acknowledge that certain sections of the Pentateuch certainly come from the post-exilic priestly school which revised the Pentateuch in the interests of the Jerusalem sanctuary and its priesthood.

Professor Winnett has not written a book on the Pentateuch as a whole; rather he has concentrated on the Mosaic tradition, believing that a thoroughgoing literary analysis of that can provide the key to the Pentateuchal problem. The theory he seeks to substantiate is that there was one basic Mosaic tradition which, while it remained oral, underwent development, but did not grow after it had been committed to writing. That basic tradition was revised after the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C. in the interests of the surviving kingdom of Judah; a revised version of it (D) was put out in the seventh century B.C.; and finally, the post-exilic priestly school attempted to reconcile the original basic tradition with D. "The key to the Pentateuchal problem lies in recognition of the fact that the tradition, in its present form, reflects the claim of the Jerusalem

sanctuary and priesthood to primacy over the Northern Samaritan priesthood and sanctuary, a claim which was without historical foundation" (page ix).

Thus, Professor Winnett will have nothing to do with the two separate documents, J and E, and, not infrequently, distinctive words, phrases, and even sections, which are regarded by many scholars as evidences for the existence of these two documents, are regarded by him as additions made by P to the original basic document, so that he attributes more to P revision than most others would do. Again, where a passage in the Pentateuch contains two differing records of an event, that is often regarded by him, not as evidence of different documents, but of an overworking of the original narrative for dramatic effect. (Compare pp. 10, 13, 79.) With regard to the use of the divine names, Yahweh and Elohim, Professor Winnett, while not disputing the validity of the method of using these names for differentiating the component elements of the book of Genesis, denies that it can be applied to the Book of Exodus. He maintains that the name Yahweh had a more intimate and personal connotation, while the name Elohim had a more mysterious note: that there is truth in this contention will not be denied. These two divine names are different in kind, and the difficulty of basing any differentiation of sources upon the use of these names, in the Pentateuchal books after Genesis, is quite generally recognised. It is interesting that Professor Winnett argues for the location of Horeb as east of the Gulf of Akaba and he identifies Kadesh with Petra. He argues for Exodus 20.23-26, 23.10-19, as the Ritualistic Decalogue of Horeb; that of Exodus 34 he believes to be much later in date, whilst he holds that the Moral Decalogues of Exodus 20, is a P addition.

It is impossible, in a short review, to go into Professor Winnett's arguments in detail. He will not always convince his readers, but he has produced a book which cannot be disregarded. He acknowledges Volz and Rudolph to be his forerunners, but he presents his own case and he does it with skill and with a full knowledge of the relevant literature.

J. MAUCHLINE

Introduction to St. Augustine. The City of God. Being Selections from the *De Civitate Dei*, including most of the XIXth book, with text, translation and running commentary. By R. H. BARROW. Faber and Faber Ltd. London. 30s.

WITH the sole exception of the Confessions the *De Civitate Dei* is the most interesting of the writings of St. Augustine for the general reader, and the interest is increased by the fact that to-day we live

in an anxious age of drastic change comparable in many ways to that in which the book was written, with an old world sadly shaken and a new one struggling to be born. What had the classically educated Christian preacher to say as he stood between Classical antiquity and what we have been accustomed to call the Christian Middle Ages? Naturally St. Augustine is not concerned to answer our questions. He wrote to defend Christianity from the attacks of his contemporaries, and much of the defence, like the attack, belongs to its own time and is dead to-day. But there is much more in the *De Civitate* than that. There is much which is philosophically and theologically profound, and which is therefore relevant to all times and circumstances. There is perhaps the secret of the survival of Christianity when the Empire with which it had become ambiguously connected fell to pieces, a secret worth exploring again.

Unhappily by reason of its size and diffuseness the *De Civitate* is apt to repel the reader who has seldom time or patience to go through with it. Mr Barrow has done a useful service in offering a selection of the more important passages, by the study of which we may the more readily appreciate the permanent value of the work as a whole.

Selection is of course a precarious business, but Mr Barrow has adopted a sound principle. Ostensibly the theme of the work is The Origin, Growth and Proper Ends of the two Cities, the Earthly and the Heavenly. This is taken as a guide. The first ten books accordingly are omitted except for certain passages which can be usefully fitted into the scheme. Sufficient is taken from books XI-XVIII to indicate what is treated under the headings Origin and Growth of the Two Cities; and to supplement the rather disappointing historical section a large part of book V is introduced which deals with the place of the Roman Empire in God's Providential government of human history. Nearly the whole of book XIX is included, rightly because for most readers it will appear the most important and most illuminating part of the whole work. Yet it is a magnificent digression suggested by the fact that the word End, *Finis*, has an ethical as well as an eschatological sense. It is a little surprising that Mr Barrow has included nothing from the later books which deal with vital topics, and which undoubtedly in St. Augustine's own mind form the culmination of the whole. The Proper Ends of the Two Cities are not revealed until the Day of Judgment.

Mr Barrow has further come to meet our weakness by confronting the Latin text with a new translation which is free enough to be readable but is at the same time exact. His running commentary, which follows, is concerned not with the minutiae of exegesis but with the exposition of the thought. For compactness and lucidity

it could not well be bettered. He brings to his task a masterly grasp of the classical background as well as of the theological and philosophical discussions of the present time. Of the former an outstanding example is the treatment of the idea of monarchy in the ancient world (pp. 168-174). The latter is apparent throughout. Mr Barrow calls his book *An Introduction to St. Augustine.* It certainly introduces us to the very heart of the great Doctor's teaching.

JOHN H. S. BURLEIGH

The Journal of Ecclesiastical History. Edited by C. W. Dugmore. Vol. I, No. 1, April 1950.

THE inauguration of a Journal of Ecclesiastical History in these days is doubtless an undertaking involving "vision and courage". It will receive a warm welcome, and confidence is inspired by the names of the Editor and his Advisory Committee. The net is to be spread widely. Ecclesiastical History is to be interpreted elastically and contributions are to be welcomed from members of all Communions "provided only that they are written in accordance with accepted standards of historical scholarship". The first issue contains interesting matter from cover to cover. Professor T. W. Manson writes on "The New Testament Basis of the Doctrine of the Church". Professor Molland of Oslo discusses the doctrine of Apostolic Succession in Irenaeus. Liturgical and medieval and later studies follow, and Professor N. H. Baynes contributes a characteristically complete Bibliographical Note on recent work on the Byzantine Church. There are reviews of important recent books, including J. G. Lockhart's *Life of Cosmo Gordon Lang.*

JOHN H. S. BURLEIGH

About the Gospels. By C. H. DODD. Cambridge University Press. 3s. 6d.

A PERENNIAL problem in the Church is how to present the results of Biblical scholarship to the rank and file of the laity. It is most important for both scholars and people that the Church as a whole should be aware of the trends in scholarship and kept informed in regard to current Biblical studies. In Great Britain to-day, the B.B.C. is playing a useful part in this "information service" for church people, and we cannot value too highly such a series of talks as that given by Professor C. H. Dodd as part of the Sunday Morning Service in the Home Programme in September and October 1949.

These talks are now available in print under the title, *About the Gospels*, and one is immediately attracted by the charm and vitality of their language and the directness and clarity of their approach.

They offer a generally accepted critical (not hypercritical!) view of the four Gospels. This is a small book to put into the hands of as many thoughtful Christian men and women as possible.

Several technical terms (e.g. "Gospel", "Covenant") are made clearer to the man in the street, as when Professor Dodd sets forth why "Mark did not call his book a Life of Jesus, or Memoirs of Jesus, but The Gospel of Jesus Christ". Many will also be grateful to the writer for his clear exposition of the term "oral tradition", which he relates to the favourite New Testament word "witness'. "The oral tradition behind the Gospels is anything but irresponsible gossip. It is the sifted and certified tradition of a community."

After a very able comparison of the three Synoptic Gospels, Professor Dodd deals with the Fourth Gospel in his last chapter, "The Interpretation of the Gospel". He writes a very lively paraphrase of the dialogue when Jesus stood before Pilate, and then adds: "Your Greek reader of the second century—or your English reader of the twentieth—should understand that well enough, and find it relevant." The pressing and difficult task at persent is just to make the Gospel material *relevant*, and we cannot be too grateful to this competent scholar for his help in this.

R. Stuart Louden

Our Heritage of Free Prayer. Prepared for the Congregational Union of England and Wales—Life and Work Department. Independent Press, London.

In present days there is a notable trend towards liturgical usages in the public worship of the Free Churches. As stated in this booklet there is a haunting feeling that the day of free prayer is done and that the future lies with set prayer and liturgies. There is an increasing tendency to publish orders of service for special occasions as well as ordinary worship and Sunday School purposes. Numerous volumes have been issued by various denominations which are useful for devotional guidance but which are apt to become indispensable crutches and to contribute to the neglect of earnest extempore prayer. There is thus a distinct departure from traditional practice in non-conformity which is not generally welcomed in more conservative quarters and regarded as a sign of spiritual poverty. Printed and read prayer by constant and uniform use tends to become formal and lifeless especially when rendered as a mere perfunctory duty.

It is an old bone of contention—the relative values of set and free prayer and the balance between the two is admirably kept in this Congregational booklet. It leaves the impression that free prayer

in public is preferable when "well done" and yet too often, it is admitted, a congregation suffers from the mood and temperament of the individual minister, who may all too easily descend to bathos and ill-taste. One instance is cited in which an otherwise good prayer was marred by the sentence, "And if there be any backbiters or slanderers in this congregation, give them a short run, Lord." Under such conditions set forms have the advantage in order, dignity and beauty besides giving worshippers the satisfaction of feeling that the whole Church throughout the world is offering the same prayers so that each congregation is not a struggling, isolated unit but a conscious part of an innumerable company.

We are well warned against pitfalls of spontaneity in attempting desperate petitions and disturbing innovations also making public prayer a substitute for personal devotion and active service. Leadership in worship should make us feel the need of God all the time, seeking strength to conquer difficulties and temptations, forgiveness for sins and mistakes and asking grace to enable us to discover the will of God and in some measure to share in His mind and purpose with entire self-dedication. Helpful hints are provided for "conceived prayers" along prepared lines, as suggested long ago by Isaac Watts, so that unity, development, orderly progress and comprehensiveness may be attained. Brevity is another essential of which Anglican Collects are an excellent example. Above all is the prayer life of the officiating clergyman himself which alone can give an impressive spiritual tone to the service of worship. "The prayers which are most helpful are those which come from the personality most fully stable and possessed by Christ, in which confidence, understanding, and sustained communion with God are most clearly seen."

G. R. S. Reid

Guides to the Thought of Karl Barth, Nicholas Berdyaev, Emil Brunner, Karl Heim, Karl Jaspers, Jacques Maritain and Reinhold Niebuhr. By E. L. Allan. Hodder and Stoughton. 2s. each.

Hodder and Stoughton have recently served up a course of theological *hors d'oeuvres*. Some will at once be prompted to ask the question: ought it to be done? I think there is little doubt that it is worth attempting. There is very good reason for a real effort being made to keep not only the clergy, not only the all too occasional layman who in this country takes up theology as a special interest and pursuit, but also the ordinary interested Churchman, in touch with the theological movements of the day. The names and theses

of those who have set their mark on theological thought to-day should be familiarised to as wide a circle as possible.

Can the thing be done? Again I think the answer is in the affirmative. And here it appears to be done with a great measure of success. The promise is attached to these little books that with them you can introduce yourself easily and quickly to the ideas and teaching of the thinkers named. This is a very large claim—perhaps just a little more than anyone has a right to make or the ability to justify. But the success attained is considerable.

The dangers inherent in such an attempt are obvious, but they are not easily avoided. Eight thousand words are very quickly expended, and when the theme is as gigantic as that provided by the *opera* of a Niebuhr or a Jaspers, it is evident that a good deal must necessarily go unsaid that might well have a claim to expression. The calibre and weight of the components of this course are very great. Bombay duck and shredded papaya are very well in the *milieu* of an *hors d'oeuvres*; but it is difficult to fit in roast beef and Christmas pudding. The risk run when the method is diverted from gastronomy to theology is that the total result is apt to be more like broth, in which the piquancy of the individual ingredients is lost. This risk has been bravely accepted, courageously run and (if the truth must be said) not entirely avoided.

The best criterion to apply to such little books is to ask whether the impression left on the reader is a clear and recognisable portrait of the individual, "roughnesses, pimples, warts, and everything". to whose thought each of them professes to be a guide. By this standard the present writer would single out the essays on Berdyaev and Barth.

Committed to a severely limited number of words, Mr Allen still finds room to sketch in the background. In the case of Berdyaev, Shakespeare, Sir Thomas More, Dean Colet, Erasmus and Laplace are all summoned to give testimony or illumination within a page, and a little breathlessly the writer pursues his elected quarry. The "God-man" idea and Freedom are nominated as the dominant conceptions in Berdyaev's thought; a brief chapter devoted to the "End of the World" represents what is perhaps the best known feature of his thought; and a capable account of the Russian background sets it in perspective.

The little volume on Barth is good. In this case, increased length has been permitted, and assisted by this a readable and reliable account is given of the way in which Barth's thought has moved forward from the early stridency of the *Römerbrief* towards the Christocentricism of his more recent systematic period. Some things are excellently said. Barth is seen as a theologian "who has made it his

business to turn back the currents of thought which had been flowing for more than a century in Germany" (p. 7). In his account of the Trinity, "there is as it were a pattern in God Himself for his dealing with us" (p. 32). And we find the charge of "atomism", of which H. R. Mackintosh used to complain in Barth's account of the Christian life, pressed home with force and justice.

Sometimes perhaps Mr Allen's picture has not quite the same firmness of outline and crispness (though scantiness is always necessary) of detail. The little volume on Brunner suffers on this count. So little room is allowed for the exposition of this thinker that what is given sounds a little commonplace. The concluding pages of the book have the air of a somewhat shallow comment rather than that of a serious attempt to represent *ipsissima verba*.

Similarly in the case of Jaspers: what is said on pp. 20 ff. seems to bear no more than a remote connexion with the actual words of this profound thinker. It can only be an impression that is conveyed no doubt, since quotation must be cruelly brief. But the attendant disadvantage is hard to avoid: shallowness replaces profundity. This is hardly compensated for by the preaching note that occasionally occurs (e.g. p. 31 on Berdyaev), or by the uncritical affirmation of current talk of the day as though, when *ipse dixit*, the subject of the book had no more to say than others were already saying (Brunner, p. 40 ff.).

The books are agreeably produced, but it is a pity that no more than two of the seven are quite free of typographical errors.

A useful piece of popularisation has been accomplished here, and the result will be read by all who are interested with profit. And how enviable the versatility of the *vulgarisateur* and his facility in exposition!

J. K. S. Reid

Ruth and Jonah, Introduction and Commentary. By George A. F. Knight. S.C.M. Press. 91 pages. 6s.

This is the third volume to be published in the Torch Bible Commentary series, whose chief aim is to present the ordinary Bible-reader with "the essential Gospel" of each Biblical book. It seeks to bring the soundest scholarship to bear upon the item concerned and to put the particular book in its place within the Old Testament revelation.

The two books here presented are brought together, not for convenience, but because they arose out of the same situation, to different aspects of which they address their message. This situation is indicated in a brief general preface. Then follows a more

detailed Introduction to and commentary upon, first Ruth, and next, Jonah. The general preface and the introductions are good, though there is a tendency to force the parallel between the problems confronting Israel and those confronting ourselves. The commentaries are less good, being on occasion somewhat heavy-handed for books of such exquisite grace; sometimes, too, the comments seem rather remote from what an ordinary Bible-reader will look for or need; and at least once the comment appears inept. Thus the commentator says that while the story of Jonah is dramatically complete, the book itself breaks off abruptly, and he proceeds to offer us "The Unwritten Fifth Chapter". Actually the abrupt end is dramatically and artistically perfect, and forms one of the most moving "last sentences" in literature. The reader who does not hear its message, is of those who have not ears to hear, and for whom nothing further can be done.

This suggests that the aim of the series might have been better achieved had Professor Knight simply translated the two texts (permitting himself to paraphrase slightly where obscure customs require elucidation), and left the reader to receive their message, which, with the help of the introductions, he ought to be able to do quite easily.

R. E. McIntyre

The Jews from Cyrus to Herod. By Norman H. Snaith. The Religious Education Press Ltd. 6s. net.

There is great need for a book like this, and this book will go far to meet that need. The period in question, lengthy as it is, is like a great sunken continent with here and there peaks showing like islands above the waters. It is amazing how many islands Dr Snaith has charted, and how much he is able to tell us about them. So far as this book is concerned he has shown himself an expert packer, so packed are his pages; but the problem of expert packing is usually the unpacking. The rapid summary of the first part, which is the historical portion, is a miracle of compression, for it is crowded into sixty-one pages. But within that compass one can hardly discuss in detail what made Zerubbabel disappear so suddenly and so completely, and what exactly Sheshbazzar was. It ought to be a very interesting period but no one seems yet to have managed to make it so.

Part Two deals with the religious development, and with one hundred and forty pages to do it in, it is certainly more adequate, but it too suffers from the immense extent of territory that has to be covered. Also it is "the story of dreams that faded one after the other", and that does not make for ease in telling.

Dr Snaith seems to have an admiration for Persia, and quite often he invokes the influence of Persian thought and religion to explain certain developments. It does seem to be invoked too often but where one would expect it to be invoked, as in explaining "the seven holy angels", Dr Snaith rejects Persian influence, and on completely inadequate grounds.

For myself I find the chapter on the Life after Death a somewhat disappointing one. It is startling to find the author denying what is usually held, namely, "that all peoples everywhere have believed in the survival of the individual". He gives the Arunta as an outstanding case of the contrary. But if the Arunta believe that children are the ancestors reborn, how can that prove anything of the kind? Surely that is a strong way of saying that the individual does survive. Also where does the writer find warrant for "the idea that the dead tend to retain some life during the period immediately following death". If this means that life persists only for a time after death, that surely is not an Old Testament idea. Certainly no proof is offered that it is. Then Sheol is taken to be the ancient traditional doctrine. Is that really so? Is it not rather a later doctrine, designed to obliterate a cult of the dead? He finds two passages only in the Old Testament which speak clearly of a resurrection life after death, but he does not discuss at all the people who were translated, like Enoch, Moses and Elijah.

But the outstanding feeling is one of gratitude to Dr Snaith for so adequate a volume. It deals with a period that few know very much about, but it leaves them no excuse to continue so.

D. M. McDougall

Unto a Full-grown Man. S.P.C.K. 6s.

This is the seventh of a series of ten study manuals being published for the Anglican Young People's Association under the above title. The sub-title of all the volumes is "A Method of Corporate Mental Action for Study Groups". While it is admitted that the phrase "corporate mental action" is somewhat inelegant, it is claimed that it is as good as any that could be devised for that corporate experience of common life, common mind and common action that the series is concerned to promote.

The modern attitude to education in general is assumed, viz. that study has to be primarily in terms of activity and experience rather than of knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored. In the phrase of A. N. Whitehead, it is dangerous to inculcate "inert ideas" which have no bearing on activity and experience, and ac-

cordingly this volume like its six predecessors attempts "a new essay in dogmatic evangelism".

The method that young people are here urged to follow in their study of the Anglican Mission is portrayed in five terms—Prepare, Picture, Ponder, Pray, Promise. This provides a framework of discipline for the corporate study of groups and prevents discussion from being vaguely discursive, with no definite issue in decision and commitment. It resembles the method of "See, Judge, Act" which is being employed in other experiments within the Church to-day.

There is enough material in the book to keep even a vigorous group going for a year or two. As its avowed purpose is to help young Anglicans to a realisation of what it means to belong to the Anglican Communion, it could hardly begin in any other way than by a chapter on "The Genius of Anglicanism" and another on the missionary societies which have spread Anglicanism throughout the world. The greater part of the book is taken up with an historical survey in twelve chapters of the growth of Anglicanism in all the continents, and it closes with a compressed but clear chapter on the religions of the world.

Books of this sort are sometimes dull and turgid, but this book is pleasantly readable throughout. Because of the manifold witness to the wonder of the modern missionary movement, it could profitably be used by those who were not going in for the particular method of study that is prescribed, and also by those seeking to know more of missions other than those of their own Church.

GEORGE S. GUNN

Concerning the Faith in Christ: Studies in the Christian Faith. By JOHN HOWAT. Church of Scotland Youth Committeee. 3s. 6d.

Genesis i-xii: Books of the Bible Series, No. 4. By D. M. G. STALKER. Church of Scotland Youth Committee. 1s. 6d.

THESE two Youth Committee publications provide an interesting contrast. Mr Howat's book is a new volume in a familiar series of textbooks for Bible Class leaders. It conforms to the traditional pattern and provides material for a full session's work with daily Bible readings, weekly praise lists, questions for discussion and suggestions for further reading. The topic chosen is timely and Mr Howat brings to its treatment the knowledge of the theologian and the practical experience of the teacher. The volume should prove a very valuable addition to a well-tried series.

Mr Stalker's booklet is the fourth in a new series. It gives a clear and scholarly introduction to the first eleven chapters in the book of Genesis. It might be suggested that distrust is more fundamental

than disobedience in the story of the Fall and that a world-wide Flood is hardly "the most natural explanation" of the prevalence of flood stories in the traditions of widely separated primitive peoples. But Mr Stalker's thoroughly competent treatment of his material leaves little room for criticism. The real question raised by the booklet concerns the purpose of the series. Is it intended to stimulate interest in Biblical scholarship among intelligent church members? If so, the treatment should surely be more topical and less systematic. Those who want information about the Nephilim and the genealogical lists of Genesis can find it in commentaries. We need a series of books which will be more closely related, in selection of topic and in treatment, to the interests and perplexities of the intelligent Christian layman.

J. W. D. Smith

Into Thy Courts. By F. J. Taylor. Church Book Room Press. 147 pages. 3s.

This book was first published in 1947, and is now re-issued in paper covers and at a cheaper price. Designed for lay members of the Church of England, it takes the Book of Common Prayer for its framework, and both explains the main services and also interprets their theological presuppositions. It is a small book, but important. Not only is it one of the signs of the revived interest now shown by Anglican Evangelicals in the Church and its worship, but also it is valuable in itself. Mr Taylor, with his intimate knowledge of the Reformers and true grasp of their theology, gives us a book which is a faithful interpretation of the Church of England's book.

T. H. L. Parker

Correction. In the last issue of the *Scottish Journal of Theology* (Vol. 4, No. 1), p. 63, line 16 ff, should read: "The direction of the 1662 Prayer Book is to repeat the appropriate part of the words of institution."

RECENT TRENDS IN BIBLICAL STUDIES[1]

by The Rev. Principal RAYMOND ABBA

In September 1940 an incendiary bomb set fire to the Natural History Museum in London. Two months later when the débris was being cleared it was discovered that some Albrizzia Julibrissin seeds a hundred and fifty years old had begun to sprout. Heat and hose-water had induced germination. Unsuspected life which had persisted through a century and a half was suddenly revived by the ravages of war.

That is precisely what is happening to the Bible to-day: the old seed is putting out new shoots. The stress and strain of the war years have provided conditions in which the Bible has become alive. We have seen dictators once more stride through the earth; we have been back again in the days of Sargon and Nebuchadrezzar; and the prophets of Israel still utter their trumpet call for justice, righteousness and truth. The books of Daniel and Revelation—so long the happy hunting-ground of commentating cranks—speak a language which we have learnt from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Jewry and France. When civilisation was being rocked to its very foundations, many people came to discover for themselves that here were to be found the things which cannot be shaken.

1. The Changing Emphasis

Accompanying, and to a large extent underlying, this revival of popular interest there has been in recent years a complete change of emphasis in the academic field of Biblical Studies. The period which has just ended has been one of intense analytical study of the Bible. Its documents have been subjected to a more careful scrutiny than have any other ancient writings, with the result that a flood of light has been thrown on Bible times enabling us to understand much which for our fathers was obscure. Questions of date, authorship and authenticity

[1] The Inaugural Lecture of the United Theological Faculty delivered in the Gillespie Hall, St. Andrew's College, in the University of Sydney, on 14th March 1949.

have been investigated by some of the ablest scholars of the day, and certain broad principles of scientific Biblical analysis have been laid down. *The International Critical Commentary* is a monument to the thoroughness of this historical and analytical work.

This very necessary and salutary period of analysis has now, however, given place to an equally necessary period of synthesis. Lest what I say should be misunderstood, let me make it quite clear that this in no way implies any going back upon what have come to be known as the assured results of higher criticism. The critical and historical analysis is taken for granted, but the main concern of the Biblical scholar is now to expound the positive message of Scripture as the living and abiding Word of God for to-day. And instead of emphasising the obvious diversity of Scripture, stress is now laid on the essential unity of the Bible and of Biblical Theology. Dr H. H. Rowley has summarised this changing emphasis in Biblical Studies thus:

> In recent years a new change is coming over Biblical study, whose significance is far too little perceived. The newer attitude does not reject the work of the earlier study, but seeks to conserve all that is of worth in the fruits of every approach. Yet it desires to transcend them. It accepts substantially the work of Biblical criticism, but beyond the desire to know the date and authorship of the books of the Bible and the meaning they had for their first readers, it seeks the abiding significance of the Bible, and in particular its significance for this generation. It recognises all the human processes that went into the making of the Bible, without reducing it to the level of a merely human document, and it acknowledges that its scientific study, which is still valued and continued, is not enough. . . . For the Bible is, primarily and fundamentally, God's word to man, and through all its human processes of authorship and transmission there is a divine process. Its recognition is not new, indeed, but it is claiming a more central place in Biblical study, and it is this that constitutes the most significant change of recent years.[1]

2. The Historical Background

The full significance of this change of emphasis can be seen only if it is viewed against its historical background. I ask leave, therefore, at this stage to survey briefly the field of Biblical Studies during the preceding periods.

1. It is frequently asserted that the pre-critical view of the Bible from the second century to the eighteenth was essentially

[1] *The Relevance of the Bible*, pp. 15-16.

literalist, the Scriptures being regarded as verbally dictated to the writers by the Holy Spirit and therefore inerrant. That, however, is a generalisation which needs qualification. In the Middle Ages, as represented by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, for instance, the emphasis of, say, a preaching friar was on the spiritual and moral meaning of Scripture for the hearers, rather than on any question of the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of the text. Indeed the literal meaning was often almost completely obscured by the current method of interpretation, based as it was on the idea of a multiple sense of Scripture. All Scripture, it was said, had four distinct meanings—first, the literal or historical; second, the allegorical; third, the anagogical or mystical; and fourth, the tropological or moral. Thus according to Stephen Langton, Jerusalem can mean four different things. Its literal or historical meaning is, of course, the city on Mount Zion; but allegorically it stands for the Church Militant, in an anagogical or mystical sense it means the Church Triumphant; and its tropological or moral meaning is the faithful soul. The literal interpretation, however, was the least esteemed for purposes of edification. Having no spiritual nourishment in itself, it was compared by St. Bernard to the outside crust of the bread, indigestible and dry. "The Books of Moses", says Master Rypon of Durham, "are rude when considered historically, nevertheless within they are full of moral senses and doctrines, useful alike to the preacher and to his audience."[1]

The whole approach to the Bible was thus theological rather than literal, although the literal sense was never entirely neglected. "How do you read Scripture without reading the letter?" asks Hugh of St. Victor. "If the letter is removed what is left of Scripture?"[2] And, as Conrad Pepler observes, "a happy phrase of St. Anselm's may serve as a signpost to the care and energy expended on the letter of Scripture during these centuries: 'If a man does not bring his own common sense to bear upon Scripture, the more subtle, the madder he is.' Common sense demands that the historical meaning of the word written down in the Bible should be first understood, and for that the original language in which it was written should

[1] Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England*, p. 59.
[2] *De Scripturis et Scriptoribus Sacris*, c. 5.

be consulted." And he goes on to remind us that in the thirteenth century "the zeal for an authoritative text and for its direct meaning is here as intense as at any time in the history of Christianity".[1] It is, of course, St. Thomas Aquinas who insists upon the importance of the letter in any interpretation of Scripture: "Thus in Holy Writ no confusion results, for all the interpretations are founded on one—the literal—from which alone can any argument be drawn, and not from those intended in allegory."[2] As before, however, the emphasis was theological rather than literalistic, the value of the literal sense was its use as a basis for allegorical, mystical and moral interpretation by which the present teaching of the Church was presented through the medium of the Bible.

2. Aquinas' insistence on the importance of the literal sense of Scripture was not always remembered in the allegorical extravagances of the later middle ages, but it was re-emphasised by the Reformers of the sixteenth century. Himself a professor of New Testament in the University of Wittenberg, Luther's sole criterion for reformation was Scripture. Refusing to renounce his books until they were proved wrong by arguments from Scripture, it is for the authority of Holy Scripture as against human traditions that he stands. He also opposes the authority of Scripture to the "spirituals" in his time who claim an inner light, an inward illumination of the Holy Spirit apart from the written Word. But Luther held no theory of verbal inspiration; he did not need such to give the Scriptures authority for him; the authority of the Word was self-evident. Along with the other leading Reformers, Luther distinguished between the Word of God and the Scriptures which contained it: the Bible was the crib in which Christ is laid. His whole attitude toward Scripture was therefore critical and discriminating, as witness his preference for the Psalms in the Old Testament and St. John's Gospel, the Pauline Epistles and 1 Peter in the New. James he dismissed as an epistle of straw.

For Calvin the final authority was the word of Scripture authenticated in the heart by the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum*. But although he treats the Bible as an organic whole,

[1] Chapter on "The Faith of the Middle Ages" in *The Interpretation of the Bible* (ed. Dugmore), pp. 38-9.

[2] *Summa Theologica*, 1a, q. i, art. 10, reply obj. 1.

he does not ignore differences due to progress in revelation: "When God speaks to babes," he says, "He babbles." You will find no doctrine of mechanical and literal inspiration in Calvin. Alan Richardson's remark that "Calvin believed that ultimately the authority of the Bible was based upon the fact that it was dictated *verbatim* by God Himself to the human writers"[1] is not in accordance with the facts, as witness his doubts regarding the authenticity of James, 2 Peter and Jude, and his candid comment on Matthew 27.9: "How the name of Jeremiah crept in, I confess that I do not know, nor do I give myself much trouble to inquire. The passage itself plainly shows that the name of Jeremiah has been put down by mistake, instead of Zechariah (11.13), for in Jeremiah we find nothing of this sort, nor anything that even approaches to it."[2] It is with the substance and sense of Scripture, in which the sovereign grace of God is supremely revealed, that he is concerned. Thus, in the words of R. H. Lightfoot, "the leading Reformers had assigned to the Scriptures the supreme place indeed, but as a storehouse of divinely communicated knowledge of doctrine and conduct; they had not regarded the Bible as an infallible authority."[3]

3. The scholarly and independent attitude of the Reformers, however, was not maintained by their followers and successors, and in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there was a hardening of the Protestant view of Scripture. The Bible came to be viewed as inerrant, a collection of texts to which men could appeal as an infallible guide.[4]

4. The rise of the historical critical view of the Bible in the latter part of the eighteenth century meant a revolution in Christian thinking. It was, of course, all bound up with that great expansion of the frontiers of knowledge which began with the Renaissance. The discoveries of Copernicus, Galileo and Newton had pushed back the boundaries of the universe, a reign of law had replaced the older supernaturalism and the earth with its inhabitants had been displaced from its supposed

[1] *Christian Apologetics*, pp. 211-12.
[2] *Commentary on Matthew*, 27.9.
[3] Chapter on "The Critical Approach to the Bible in the Nineteenth Century" in *The Interpretation of the Bible* (ed. Dugmore), p. 77.
[4] See Abbey and Overton, *The English Church in the Eighteenth Century*, Vol. I, p. 560.

position of centrality as the hub of the planets. New parts of the world had been discovered and were being explored. There was an increasing confidence in the unaided power of human reason. Hence in the eighteenth century a spirit of inquiry was abroad and the principle of authority was being questioned on all sides. As Alan Richardson says, "The age of the Enlightenment questioned all things, including the idea of a divinely dictated *corpus* of sacred writings."[1] Why should not the inductive method, which was of such proved value in the field of Natural Science, be used in Biblical study?

It is, perhaps, unfortunate that Eichhorn should have labelled this new approach to the Bible the "higher criticism" —a term little understood and consequently much abused. As distinct from the lower or textual criticism—the attempt to recover as far as possible the authentic text, energetically pursued, as we have seen, in the medieval Church—higher or source criticism deals with a particular document higher up the stream, as it were. It attempts to discover its exact date and authorship, to trace any older sources which have been used in its composition, to study it in relation to its historical background, and hence to come to a clearer understanding of its meaning and purpose. As Lightfoot points out, "If a student reaches the most conservative conclusions on these topics, he is, by the nature of his study, just as much a higher critic as the exponent of novel or negative theories about them."[2]

3. Liberalism

The great Liberal scholars of the nineteenth century were the pioneers of this new critical approach to the Bible, and our debt to them is considerable. In these days when the defects of Liberalism have become increasingly apparent, we are in danger of forgetting the lasting contribution of men like Wellhausen and Bousset, Harnack and Wrede, Driver and Kirsopp Lake. The Liberals laid the foundations of modern Biblical scholarship with courage and devotion. Some of their conclusions were admittedly extreme and can no longer be held, but the broad results of their labours—such as the recognition of the composite nature of the Pentateuch, the different strata in the Book of Isaiah and the priority of St. Mark's Gospel—have

[1] *Preface to Bible Study*, p. 23.

[2] op. cit., p. 78.

stood the test of time and been confirmed by subsequent research. They have enabled us, for the first time, to arrange the books of the Bible in their correct chronological order, and, by seeing them against the historical background of their time, to understand their content more fully than ever before. By demonstrating the errors of certain traditional assumptions of authorship, they have released us from problems which had long taxed the intelligence—and the ingenuity—of the best minds. Furthermore, not only have the nineteenth century Liberal scholars placed in our hands the tools that we need for scientific Biblical study; in days when men were asking whether the Bible could withstand the impact of modern critical inquiry, they established once-for-all the unshakable historical basis of the Christian faith.

Nevertheless the Liberal view of Scripture had certain grave defects which cannot be ignored. In its preoccupation with the human factors of date, authorship and composition, it tended to obscure the divine element in the Bible. The history of religion usurped the place of theology. For the objective fact of revelation there was substituted man's search for God and his increasing apprehension of the divine. Thus the Old Testament became reduced to the record of an important stage in the spiritual pilgrimage of mankind, or an account of the development of Hebrew religion. Moreover, Liberal criticism stopped short of the goal; it did not go far enough. Its brilliant analysis was illuminating, but it failed to give us that complete synthesis that we need. In short, it became so engrossed in the literary and historical *prolegomena* of Biblical study that it never got to grips with the constructive theological task of Biblical exposition.

Professor T. W. Manson, in his brilliant and penetrating essay, *The Failure of Liberalism to Interpret the Bible as the Word of God*,[1] finds the fundamental defect of the Liberal approach in its presuppositions. In particular, "the working hypotheses of natural science were allowed to become the dogmas of theology".[2] The scientific doctrine of the universal reign of natural law, for example, precluded any interference on the part of God with the order of nature: hence it was taken for granted that miracles could never happen. "The effect of this", says Dr Manson, "is to establish a thick plate-glass window between

[1] See *The Interpretation of the Bible* (ed. Dugmore), ch. V. [2] ibid., p. 101.

God and the world. The eye of faith can see through the window and observe that there is a God and that He appears to be benevolently disposed towards men; but nothing more substantial than signals of paternal affection and filial trust and obedience can get through."[1]

Furthermore, the theory of evolution—so obviously true in the biological realm—was assumed to be equally valid in the study of religion. The Bible, therefore, far from confronting men with the living and abiding Word of God, showed "the successive stages by which the Hebrew people gradually evolved religiously from the crudities of primitive Semitic superstition to the Prophets and the Law, and eventually to the Gospel". But even here there is no finality; Christianity is just "the best that has been achieved up to date".[2] Revelation thus gives place to conviction. "What we are left with in religion is the views held by all the more or less gifted people who have reflected on the divine nature and on human duty and destiny. . . . The presuppositions of Liberalism could only allow conviction, and so conviction must do duty for revelation. The plate-glass window set up between heaven and earth is sound-proof."[3]

Liberalism with its fundamental dogmas of the "steel-and-concrete order of nature" and the impossibility of special revelations was thus "predisposed against a God who intervenes in the world, or in history, whether by deed or word; and predisposed in favour of an interpretation of religion which would make it no more than an element in human civilisation, the sum of man's deepest and gradually achieved convictions about ultimate Reality and absolute values".[4] It was these dogmatic presuppositions which vitiated Liberal Biblical study. "Having taken up its axioms, which were at variance with the fundamental ideas of the Bible," Manson concludes, "there was no way of carrying the business through which did not involve picking and choosing among the Biblical material on a scale and with an arbitrariness quite impossible to justify, and then imposing interpretations on what was accepted which were very far indeed from the original intention of the words. . . . The truth, now coming clearly to light, is that Christianity was being gently and gradually transformed into humanism—and humanism when it is full grown brings forth totalitarianism."[5]

[1] ibid., pp. 93-4. [2] op. cit., p. 94. [3] op. cit., p. 95.
[4] op. cit., p. 95. [5] op. cit., pp. 102-3.

4. Fundamentalism

Present-day Fundamentalism is very largely a reaction against the Liberal position. It cannot, however, be said simply to represent the pre-critical view since it can claim neither that its emphasis is that of the Middle Ages, nor that its conclusions are those of the sixteenth century Reformers. It represents rather a further hardening of the particular view of seventeenth and eighteenth century Protestantism as a result of the impact of the Liberal critical approach. The publication of *Essays and Reviews* in 1860, for example, roused Dr Burgon to assert from the university pulpit in Oxford that "the Bible is none other than the voice of Him that sitteth upon the throne. Every book of it, every chapter of it, every verse of it, every word of it, every syllable of it (where are we to stop?), every letter of it, is the direct utterance of the Most High. The Bible is none other than the Word of God, not some part of it more, some part of it less, but all alike the utterance of Him who sitteth upon the throne, faultless, unerring, supreme."[1] Fundamentalism thus does what both the thirteenth century preaching friars and the sixteenth century Reformers refused to do—it insists upon reading the Bible in the flat, as it were. It places the whole of the Old Testament, for instance, on the same level as the New, and clings tenaciously to the letter of the former even when it is at variance with the fuller revelation given in Christ. Every word is regarded as having been dictated by God; every statement is inerrant; every command is authoritative. And all must be taken literally, at its face value, as the infallible Word of God.

Admittedly, many sincere Christian people who take this position would vigorously deny that by holding it they were in any way negating God's revelation of Himself in Christ. This, however, is its logical implication, although in point of fact few of its adherents are consistent in applying their theory to the facts of the Old Testament, and most of them do not attempt to relate its difficult features to the fact of Christ. They are not concerned to make a logical synthesis but hold the two facts in tension, as it were, in the mind.

Nevertheless Fundamentalism has performed a valuable service to the Christian Church. In days when the distinctive

[1] Quoted by A. Richardson, *Preface to Bible-Study*, p. 25.

content of the faith was in danger of being dissolved in the acids of Liberalism, it did preserve the great supernatural facts of Biblical religion. And for this it has put succeeding generations in its debt.

But when this has been admitted it remains true that Fundamentalism, no less than Liberalism, is vitiated by its own presuppositions. It begins with the assumption—nowhere claimed in the Bible itself—that the Scriptures are inerrant and *verbally* dictated by the Holy Spirit. All evidence to the contrary, therefore, is ruled out from the start. It presupposes that traditional theories of authorship must be right and proceeds, in a quite arbitrary manner, to select indiscriminately from any likely source whatever evidence supports its claim, and conveniently ignores the rest. It takes for granted that scientific critical method is bound up indissolubly with the Liberal theology which it rightly repudiates, and therefore assumes that those who use the critical tools must adopt the Liberal view. So the baby is thrown out with the bath-water.

5. The New Synthesis

Against the background of this historical survey we turn now to look a little more closely at the new emphasis in Biblical Studies. It is significant in that it achieves a synthesis of all that is of permanent value in both the critical and the Fundamentalist approach. Literal and historical criticism have come to stay; of that there can be no doubt. They are of proved value in Biblical research and provide the only sure foundation for accurate exegesis. Critical inquiry, freed from Liberal presuppositions, needs to be relentlessly pursued with all the resources at our disposal. Nevertheless criticism by itself is not sufficient. It is essentially *prolegomena* and as such needs to be completed by theological interpretation; and, as Father Hebert has pointed out, it is about theological interpretation that Fundamentalists really care.[1] So often confronted by barren analytical logomachies and anxious about the logical conclusions of the Liberal position, they tremble for the Ark of God. What they are quite rightly concerned about is the Faith, but they wrongly associate the integrity of the Faith with a mechanical

[1] *The Throne of David*, p. 32.

view of inspiration which is inconsistent with the facts of the Bible itself.

There is need to-day for Liberals and Fundamentalists to recognise that they have much to learn from each other, for it is in a synthesis of critical method and theological interpretation that the way forward in Biblical Studies lies. In the words of Dr John Lowe, "It is not a matter of discarding wholesale the critical approach in which we were trained and which arrived at much that is true and valuable, but we feel that the method as practised was associated too often with underlying assumptions that need purging and that it tended to stop short of the goal. We *want* something more theological, and to that extent there has been a recovery of a sounder outlook."[1]

6. The Word of God

There are four aspects of this new emphasis at which I invite you to look. The first, which springs from the Barthian Theology of the Word of God, is a fresh recognition of the objectivity and authority of the Biblical revelation. "The newer attitude", says Professor Rowley, "still recognises the clear marks of progress in the Biblical revelation, yet it does not reduce revelation to discovery. It does not cease to be interested in the development of religion, but its centre of interest is not in man but in God. It does not find the story of man's growth in the understanding of God of such absorbing interest that it becomes an end in itself, but rather seeks to perceive in every stage of the process that which is enduringly true of God."[2]

In other words, we are being reminded that in a very real sense God is the Author of the Bible. That is not to deny, of course, the part that men have had in the making of it. As Professor Dodd remarks, "For a religious book it is often curiously secular, for a divine book, astonishingly human." Neither does the assertion that God is the Author of Scripture commit us to any theory of verbal inspiration or inerrancy. The Word of God is given through fallible, sinful men: we have this treasure in earthen vessels. But what is given in the Bible is the Word of God and nothing less. These Christian Scriptures are not merely human accounts of man's search for God; they

[1] Chapter on "The Recovery of the Theological Interpretation of the Bible" in *The Interpretation of the Bible* (ed. Dugmore), p. 119.

[2] *The Relevance of the Bible*, p. 17.

are the divinely ordered record of God's revelation of Himself, in judgment and in mercy, to men. The books of the Bible, since they are historical documents, must be examined historically. The questions of their human authorship and date are of course important for our understanding of them. But in our preoccupation with historical and literary detail, in our just concern regarding the human authors, there must be constantly before our mind the fact that the Author of the whole is God. In the words of Principal H. Cunliffe-Jones, "It is a question whether we take the Bible seriously as the indispensable witness to God's revelation of Himself, or whether we cannot see beyond the multitude of human witnesses. So it must be asserted that God is the Author of the Christian Scriptures and that it is His mind we are anxious to know." "The Bible is the written Word of God not because every word is dictated by God, but because we must take the written word seriously if we are to hear the Word of God."[1]

7. The Unity of the Bible

In the second place, stress is now being laid on the essential unity of the Bible and of Biblical theology. It was a commonplace of the era of historical analysis through which we have passed to say that the Bible is not one book but many, a library rather than a single volume. In one sense, of course, this is true, and a recognition of the fact is the first step toward seeing the diverse contents of Holy Scripture in their correct literary and historical perspective. The writings which form the Old and New Testaments are the works of many authors covering a period of about a thousand years. They reflect many phases of religious thought. They are the literary deposit of successive stages of religious development. But when all this has been admitted, it is nevertheless true that these diverse writings do in fact constitute one book with an organic unity of its own; so that we can speak quite properly not only of the Scriptures but also of the Bible. The derivation of this name, which in itself expresses the unity of the whole, is significant. It was originally the Latin *Biblia*—"The Books". Then in the thirteenth century, as Westcott points out, "the neuter plural came

[1] Article on "The Authority of the Holy Scriptures", *The Presbyter*, October 1943. See also *The Authority of the Biblical Revelation* by the same writer.

to be regarded as a feminine singular, and 'The Books' became, by common consent, 'The Book', in which form the word has passed into the language of modern Europe."[1]

It is only fair to admit that this essential unity of Scripture, far from being denied, has always been recognised even in the analytical period of Biblical study which emphasised the diversity within Holy Writ; so that even in the heyday of Liberalism Wheeler Robinson could speak of "the familiar unity of the whole (Old Testament) as it lies outstretched from Genesis to Malachi".[2] Nevertheless it was diversity rather than unity which was stressed—a fact to which the theological language and book titles of the period bear witness. The Old Testament was studied from the point of view of its "religious ideas"; in the New Testament we were taught to contrast Pauline, Petrine and Johannine Christianity. The complete change of emphasis in the last few years is sufficiently indicated in the titles of two recent books—*The Unity of the New Testament* by Professor A. M. Hunter, and *The Old Testament in the New Testament* by Professor R. V. G. Tasker, both of whom are scholars in the vanguard of modern theological thought. Dr Hunter has taught us to see that "it is one purpose of God which is being fulfilled throughout both Testaments, one People of God, the story of which is being told from Abel to the apostolic age".[3] Professor Tasker reminds us that:

> . . . the main theme of the Bible is the covenant-relationship between God and man, a relationship which was initiated by God for the reconciliation of sinful man to Himself. First He entered into a covenant-relationship with the Israelites, whom He called out of Egypt for the special purpose of revealing through them His purposes for mankind; and later in the person of His incarnate Son He inaugurated a new covenant with the new Israel. The membership of this new Israel consisted of all who accepted Jesus both as the Christ, who fulfilled the prophecies made to the old Israel, and as the Saviour, who by His death and resurrection had won salvation for all mankind.[4]

There are four main factors which underlie this quickened interest in the theological unity of the Bible. The first—which has been the stimulus behind the new emphasis as a whole—is the Barthian theology, to which reference has already been made. In the second place, the pendulum has now swung from

[1] *The Bible in the Church*, p. 5. [2] *Religious Ideas of the Old Testament*, p. 2.
[3] *Introducing the New Testament*, p. 44.
[4] *The Old Testament in the New Testament*, p. 9.

the exaggerated emphasis on the Hellenistic background of the New Testament, associated with the work of Deissmann, which resulted from the discovery of the non-literary Egyptian papyri, to a fresh appreciation of the significance of the Old Testament background. As early as 1931 Sir Edwyn Hoskyns and Mr Noel Davey showed that the clue to the meaning of cardinal terms in the New Testament was to be found in the Septuagint rather than in the papyri.[1] And in the same year Professor T. W. Manson expressed his conviction that the key to the New Testament is the Old Testament conception of the "saving remnant".[2] Thirdly, there has been a new realisation of the theological significance of the Old Testament as not merely *Geschichte* but *Heilsgeschichte*. In this connexion Eichrodt's work is epoch-making,[3] and among English scholars H. H. Rowley,[4] A. G. Hebert,[5] and W. J. Phythian-Adams[6] have made valuable contributions. Fourthly, during recent years there has been a growing recognition of the essential theological unity of each of the two Testaments. In New Testament studies the trail was blazed by Professor Dodd in his book, *The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments*, which appeared in 1936, and more recently Professor Hunter has opened up this new approach in *The Unity of the New Testament*. Professor Rowley in his essay, *The Unity of the Old Testament*,[7] finds also an underlying unity within the Old Testament studied in and for itself, which then leads on to the New. There has thus become increasing apparent what Oscar Cullmann calls, "la continuité de la ligne du salut".[8]

8. Theological Interpretation

The third aspect of this new emphasis in Biblical Studies is the acknowledged necessity for a recovery of the theological interpretation of the Bible. This latter, as Dr Lowe is at pains to point out, has never been entirely lost, but—as he rightly

[1] *The Riddle of the New Testament*, ch. I: e.g. ἐκκλησία = קָהָל. In this connexion recent work on the Aramaic background of the Gospels is significant. See C. C. Terry, *The Four Gospels: A New Translation, Our Translated Gospels*, and M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*.

[2] *The Teaching of Jesus*, p. ix.

[3] *Theologie des Alten Testaments*.

[4] *The Rediscovery of the Old Testament*.

[5] *The Throne of David* and *The Authority of the Old Testament*.

[6] *The Call of Israel*, *The Fulness of Israel* and *The People and the Presence*.

[7] *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Vol. 29, No. 2, February 1946.

[8] *Christ et le Temps*, première partie.

insists—Biblical criticism, which should prepare the way for theological interpretation, has tended to become an end in itself and the student has become so immersed in it that very often he has not got on to Biblical theology at all.[1] Karl Barth puts his sensitive finger on the spot when, speaking of commentaries, he says: "I have nothing whatever to say against historical criticism. I recognise it, and once more state quite definitely that it is both necessary and justified. My complaint is that recent commentators confine themselves to an interpretation of the text which seems to me to be no commentary at all, but merely the first step towards a commentary."[2] This, of course, was not true of some of the giants of the critical period. A. B. Davidson, G. B. Gray and, more especially, George Adam Smith did attempt to give a constructive theological intrepretation. But even here the promise was greater than the achievement, and there has been little attempt to follow up this side of their work until recent years.

The kind of theological interpretation of the Bible which is urgently required to-day will be neither obscurantist nor liberal. It will not displace or supersede the historical, critical view, but will be complementary to it. Accepting the critical and historical analysis of a particular part of Scripture, it will go on to discover what is its abiding significance in the light of the fact of Christ. What, we must ask, is the Word of God which is given in this Scripture for us to-day?

This demands, as Lowe puts it, that "we will go about it with a certain expectancy, looking everywhere for theological truth, even in passages hitherto stigmatised and discarded as 'secondary', trying constantly to relate it to our condition, making it (to use one of the current catch-words) 'existential'. On that element we will dwell, devoting less time and attention than has been customary to the interesting but relatively unimportant mass of 'background' information. The trouble with much of our Biblical study was precisely that the background had become the foreground."[3]

9. The Bible and the Church

Fourthly, there is to-day an increasing awareness of the inter-relation of the Bible and the faith of the Church. It is

[1] op. cit., pp. 116-17. [2] Rom. 6. [3] op. cit., p. 121.

becoming increasingly recognised that the Bible is bound up very intimately with the life of the Church; that it is essentially a book for Christians, not for anybody; that it can be fully understood only by those who stand within the covenant of grace, not by those outside. In short, it is not a book whose meaning is plain and clear; it needs to be read and interpreted in the light of the faith of the Church.

This is so because the Bible is a product of the life of the Church; it springs directly out of it. The Bible did not produce the Church; it was rather the Church which produced the Bible, and hence it is only within the context of the life of the Church that the Bible can be rightly understood. This Book is essentially the record and interpretation of the saving acts of God in human history by which a People of God was brought into being. And it is from these saving acts of God that the faith of His People springs. These two things therefore, the record—the Bible—and the faith of the Church, are indivisibly linked together; they check and interpret each other. Both are handed down from generation to generation within the Church: both are necessary for its continued life, and neither of them can stand alone. How, for instance, is the saving love of God in Jesus Christ mediated to men to-day? An old hymn answers:

> Jesus loves me, this I know
> For the Bible tells me so.

But would it not also be true to say:

> For my mother told me so?

There are the two things—the record of the Bible and the faith of the Church passed on to us at our mother's knee—the one confirming and interpreting the other.

Thus, as Principal Cunliffe-Jones reminds us:

> The meaning of the conviction that Jesus is Lord is given by the Bible —but not by the Bible only, but by the Bible as interpreted by a living faith. . . . At some point or other the Biblical evidence must be interpreted by a theological conviction, which arises out of the Biblical material, which sets it all in a new illumination, but is not strictly given by an objective study of the Bible, but by the Bible in the light of the present affirmation of faith by an obedient Church. We are forced to go beyond the Bible to theological truth in order to understand what the Bible itself is saying.[1]

[1] *The Authority of the Biblical Revelation*, p. 112.

PROVIDENCE

An Account of Karl Barth's Doctrine[1]

by The Rev. W. A. WHITEHOUSE

Here is the eleventh *Kapitel* of Barth's *Dogmatik*, and he entitles it *The Creator and His creation.* Its three great themes are: God's Fatherly Providence, the "Negation" (Chaos or Void) of which He rules and against whose opposition He safeguards His creatures, and the ministry of angels. Before he passes on from the first to the second article of the creed, Barth promises a further *Kapitel* dealing with the ethical doctrine which rests on our understanding of God as Creator. The doctrine which he has to expound and establish in this sector of the theological field is at once the most familiar and the least secure element in the Christian outlook of modern men. We all know the kind of thing we are expected to say about God's Fatherly care. Professor Farmer's book, *The World and God*, gave substantial help towards saying it in the modern climate of thought. But there are plenty of signs that Christians tremble in face of the obligation to relate the vast and complex range of experience to the action of God. It becomes increasingly difficult to speak as though the wealth and variety of cosmic reality can be intelligibly related to the God who reveals Himself in Jesus Christ and to the action which He takes at that focal point. And what one expected from Barth was a rethinking of the doctrine of Providence on a Christological basis. What he has to say is not excitingly novel. He is happy to work with the analysis of the subject found in older works of theology, notably in the *Summa Theologica* of Aquinas and in the Reformed (rather than the Lutheran) divines. Those who now have Heppe's *Reformed Dogmatics* on their shelves may even be able to reconstruct for themselves the process by which, in study and lecture-room, this book took shape. And such as find Barth's "sources" a matter of interest will be duly intrigued by

[1] Karl Barth, *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik*, Band III/3: *Die Lehre von der Schöpfung*, 3. Teil (Evangelischer Verlag A.G. Zollikon-Zürich, 637 pp., 1950; 30 Swiss fr.; with paper covers, 27 fr.).

the ascendancy of Cocceius over Quenstedt. In my judgment he has re-told the story of God's government of the world so that it becomes a convincing and well-established story, and the secret of his success is precisely his fidelity to Christocentric theological thinking. It is not a new story, but an old one, drawn out in its full depth, so that the main theses, about whose status we have become steadily less sure, are reaffirmed, and notorious difficulties (such as that of reconciling any significant divine government with a real spontaneity of events) are properly faced. A busy reader will be moved by this volume more than by its predecessors to join in the fashionable chorus of protest against Barth's literary technique. If he had time to write books elegantly and economically instead of printing material hot from the lecture-room, how grateful we should be! But though one may thus occasionally cry for the moon, one may be profoundly grateful for what one gets instead. And indeed, the aid to easier comprehension which one longs for may be the false aid which is afforded when the treatment of a wide range of subjects is co-ordinated by a distorting "system". By the present technique, the truth of every thesis is brought to light in a manner appropriate to that thesis, and one is rebuked time after time for one's churlish complaint against repetitive and seemingly rhetorical thinking.

And now, as far as may be, granted the present reviewer's limits, we will let the content of the volume speak for itself. A translation of the fundamental theses may serve to introduce it:

48. *The Doctrine of Providence, its basis and structure*

The doctrine of Providence is concerned with the history of created being as such, more especially in that it pursues its course in every detailed respect and in its totality under the Fatherly Lordship of God the Creator, whose will takes effect and is recognisable in His Election of Grace, and therefore in the history of the covenant between Himself and man, and therefore in Jesus Christ.

49. *God the Father as Lord of His creation*

God exercises His Fatherly Lordship over His creation in that He preserves the course of its particular existence, accompanies it, and governs it. He does this in that His mercy in Jesus Christ has appeared and is powerful in the created world, so that the glory of this His Son may be made manifest in it.

50. *God and the Negation*[1]

By the counsel of God, a threat to, and actual corruption of the world have also appeared, by reason of the Negation which is hostile to the Creator's will and therefore hostile also to the good nature of His creatures. In having passed judgment upon it through His mercy which appeared and is powerful in Jesus Christ, God decides where and how, to what extent and in what ministerial relationship to His Word and Work, it may still retain a place until its refutation and destruction (which are already accomplished) are generally revealed.

51. *The Kingdom of Heaven, God's Ambassadors, and their opponents*

God's action in Jesus Christ, and therefore His dominion over His creation, are therefore called "The Kingdom of Heaven", because its claim is primarily and peculiarly upon the upper world. From this upper world, God elects and sends His ambassadors, the angels, who come as forerunners (in the sense of objective and authentic witnesses) of the revelation and actualisation of His will on earth, who accompany it as true and powerful servants of God and of men, and who stand as an excelling guard against the opposing forms and powers of Chaos.

Section 51 is the one best calculated to hit the headlines, were there any to hit, but section 49, though more pedestrian, is more important.

I

In section 48 Barth examines our belief in Providence; he takes critical account of how it has been handled in older systematic theology; and he proves that we are committed to a distinctively *Christian* belief which is not to be regarded as a modification of insights within the reach of all good men—insights derived from a "general revelation".

First he maintains, with an eye on Thomas Aquinas (*Summa Theologica* I, qq. 22-23 and, after a long interlude, 103 ff.), that the theology of this matter is in no respect part of the doctrine of God. In so far as it must, of course, rest on the doctrine of God, it does so, not because *providentia Deo conveniat* as do *scientia*, *vita*, *voluntas*, *amor*, *justitia*, *misericordia*, but because *praedestinatio* (understood as God's Election of Grace) pertains to the Being of God, and that Election carries with it both Creation and

[1] The term *Das Nichtige* is not readily translated into English. I imagine that "the Void" would convey its sense to those familiar with existentialist thinking. My wife, who neither knows German nor is a theologian, suddenly came to my rescue with "chaotic insubstantiality", which deserves, I think, to be placed on record. After all, she knows more about it than I do (cf. Gen. 3.1).

Providence. Further, the Calvinist assimilation of Providence to the doctrine of Creation, and the interpretation of it in terms of *continuous* world-creation, is wrong (cf. Heppe, p. 251: "There is a single divine act by which God creates the world and determines its government"). The dangers thus entailed are that one either abandons the precise significance of *creatio ex nihilo*, or that one interprets Providence in a falsely deterministic fashion. The action referred to here as the Fatherly Lordship of God the Creator has its ground not only within the Godhead but also outside Himself in the already established being of creatures. It is, if you like, a *continuing* of creation, but it is an act with a different "time" from that which the act of creation has. Its content is to guarantee, rather than to found.

But that is not to say that there is anything arbitrary in this further action of the Creator. We are in a position to resist any suspicion of Epicureanism that the world is at the mercy of Chance; and we must leave no room for an Aristotelian suggestion that creation is moved by a God who is in any sense indifferent to its being. But a doctrine of Providence which is not Christocentric (governed, that is, by texts such as John 5.17; Col. 1.16 f.; and Heb. 1.3), must inevitably seem speculative and insecurely grounded, and in no better case than similar doctrines which arise in pantheist and polytheist religions, as also in Judaism and Mohammedanism where the lack of a completed *Heilsgeschichte* means an attenuated belief in Providence. Therefore we must examine with care this act of faith, and no better indication of it can be found than in Questions 26-28 of the Heidelberg Catechism. Paul Gerhardt's hymns are a classical expression of the way in which the doctrine came to its own in the climate of thought created by the Reformation.

The question at issue is about the Lordship under which history develops. There is no answer to the question from world-history itself. It cannot yield the revelation which Natural Theology is concerned to find here. If, by faith, we are able to affirm that it does carry within itself the glory of God, this faith is not a response to the creatures, their life, their goodness, their beauty, etc. (and queer things begin to happen when you try to identify the glory of God with the bright side of creaturely reality). It is faith in *God*, the history of whose glory (i.e. His Lordship) is concealed in, with, and under the history of the

creatures which are His veils (*larvae Dei*). This glory is not felt nor seen, nor affirmed in dialectical judgments, but strictly *believed*. But this act of believing is sustained by perceptions which Ritschl in particular banished from Protestant thinking under the opprobrious label of *Metaphysik*, leaving nothing stronger than value-judgments. These perceptions (the subject matter of Section 49) do not afford a secure conception of how God's Providence works, and the doctrine of Providence is not an essay in the Philosophy of History. But in so far as our belief in God is *Christian* belief, in so far, that is, as we have found in "God with us" and "God for us" the eternal God who is therefore "God above us", we can pass beyond any abstract speculative theory to a securely based belief. Calvin pointed the way in isolated passages, but abandoned it in the *Institutes*, where he perpetuated the abstract handling of this matter which received its death-blow from the Lisbon earthquake.

We may begin to work out the doctrine by recognising that though the covenant-history witnessed by the Bible is only a tiny strand in the whole of world-history, yet if we have seen it aright it is the strand towards which everything else converges. And again, this strand is all of a piece with general history, so the faith which is evoked by the *Heilsgeschichte* must be faith in the God who is Lord of all events. There seem to be two histories, the history of creatures as such, and the history of God's action with His covenant-partner, and there is a positive, essential, inner connexion between them. How the history of creatures is annexed to the covenant-history is known to God alone; but *that* it is so annexed is revealed in the covenant-history itself—in the very fact, if you like, that man as God's partner is man *in the cosmos*. And the faith to which we are brought by the Gospel is that in the very act of creaturely existence we are in the Kingdom of Christ and in no other. Therefore we cannot regard universal history as something hypothetically governed by God with a hidden left hand, and therefore beyond our power to correlate with the history in which His right hand is laid bare in Jesus Christ. The strand of *Heilsgeschichte* teaches us to regard all history as the field where the Providence so clear in that strand holds universal sway. Pursuing its own course, cosmic history furnishes time, space, and opportunity for the fruition of God's covenant, and

it is preserved by the right hand of God to serve that covenant-purpose. Not by passivity nor by an imposed conformation to the life of Israel and the Church, but precisely by *its own* activity, does it "work together" with the coming of the Kingdom of God. It is the seemingly larger strand of a double history where, instead of the open presence of Jesus Christ, there are only images or reflections (heaven and earth reflecting the relation of God and man; man and woman reflecting the relation of Christ and the Church; light and darkness reflecting the relation of grace and sin, or life and death), and because these are only reflections or echoes, they give no ground for absolute affirmations of any *analogia entis*. By creation it has been *prepared* for this "co-working", though it has no competence in this respect in itself. It was not, however, made for anything else, nor made in vain. It has no status as *creatura corredemptrix*. But in so far as it proceeds under God's Providence, it is given a constitutive significance for the covenant-history. It is too ambiguous in its working to support any *Weltanschauung* which abstracts from the Kingship of Christ; not even so innocuous a version as that it is constructed for the growth of personality! When, therefore, we affirm its regularities, and assess their meaning, what we can say is that God will give to His creation its function, its purpose or goal, and its character, to-morrow as He has done to-day. But the man of faith will not prescribe to God nor to himself *how* this will take place. To affirm *this* constancy is to affirm Providence.

II

The action of God the Father, conserving, accompanying, and governing His creatures as Lord, is the theme of Section 49, for, as might have been mentioned earlier, the Providence of God is an ever-present active Lordship, not a mere envisaging of possibilities. *Non minus ad manus quam ad oculos pertinet*, as Calvin put it.

The term *conservatio* suggests an action of making safe or keeping unharmed, and the prefix has been queried in the past because it might suggest that God's action is an auxiliary aid to the creature's effort to be its own *servator*. Barth, of course, is inclined to retain it with the very different suggestion that the grace by which the creature is maintained in being is some-

thing which expresses in another way the true grace of its redemption in Jesus Christ. We have to ask whether it is proper to attribute to God an irrevocable decision to maintain, moment after moment in their limited being, creatures such as the world contains; and when we see how they are capable *in their very limitation* of participating in the history which is made by Jesus Christ, we find this to be securely grounded in God's eternal love. They are conserved in the mutual order which the notion of "second causes" expresses. The mode of God's conserving action is incomprehensible to us because in His grace there is none of that "necessity" which we find to be a necessary means for comprehension. They are conserved in face of "evil"—the possibility which God has rejected in His decisive act of creation; for "evil" is a standing threat to the being of creatures. God has power over it, but they have not. Called into play by the rejecting decision of God, it stands like a minus sign outside a bracket, affecting every creaturely plus within the bracket. It is only because God's affirmation of His creatures remains an affirmation, that the creature continues in its creaturely goodness. *Creatio*, in other words, is preceded by a *servatio*, and guaranteed by a *conservatio*. This trustworthy action of God, from which our existence hangs as by a thread from moment to moment, is disclosed (both in regard to its necessity and in regard to its trustworthiness) by the Gospel events, and the "preserving" or "establishing" words used in the New Testament repay careful lexicographical study. They bring to light the ground upon which the New Testament Christians based their expectation of continuity in Christian life, which carries within itself a firmly secured continuity in human creaturely life, and warrants the freedom from care and worry which marks New Testament humanity. Within their appointed limits, therefore, we can take for granted the lasting reality of God's creatures.

This conserving action of God is the divine factor which faith tries to apprehend in all natural and human history. We go on to understand it as the *concursus divinus*. God's accompanying of His creatures through their history with Fatherly Lordship over them. The Deist story about God in His relation to creatures will not do. God does not leave them to work out the genius of their inherent nature. He accompanies them as

Lord, so that His will is done on earth as it is in heaven; and yet He acts throughout with respect for their relative autonomy and spontaneity. Familiar questions come under discussion in this section—the relation of the First Cause to second causes (the proper analogical use of "cause" in this context being carefully elucidated), and all that falls under the topic *De Potentia Dei*. Barth insists that these questions can be tackled properly only if we work with fully Christian concepts.

> By "God" we understand: the one, who as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is eternal love, has life in Himself—and *as such* is also the *per se* Being, the Almighty in the Height above His creation, and *causa causarum*. By "the will of God" we understand: His fatherly good will, His decision of grace in Jesus Christ, the mercy in which He has set Himself from eternity to rescue His creation and to give it eternal life in community with Himself—His will which, *as such*, is also His kingly lordly will, disposing the existence and operation of His creation unconditionally and irresistibly. And by "the operation of God" we understand His action in the history of the covenant founded on His decision of grace, with its fulfilment in His giving of His Son, and its establishment in the work of the Holy Ghost to awaken faith and obedience—His operation which, *as such*, is also His mighty operation in the whole created realm, over and in, before, with, and after all creaturely operation, in virtue of which the whole of this pertains to *His* operation and is completely subordinated to Him (p. 132 f.).

The *concursus divinus* can be further elucidated by distinguishing three moments within it: *praecurrit*, *concurrit*, *succurrit*. The observable processes whereby creatures are determined in their being are held within a predetermination by God, which is an unconditioned and irresistible expression of His Fatherly Lordship. Readers will remember what Barth has already done (in II/2, cf. Camfield's summary in *Reformation Old and New*, chap. IV) with the doctrine of predestination. Here he has to take careful account of the status of the semi-hypostasised laws and norms under which the course of nature proceeds, and to indicate a significant act of God preceding their operation in every given case; an act which does not abrogate, but which does relativise them. To make this act of God significant in the mind of modern men is one of the great difficulties in this field, and I do not think that Barth has wholly succeeded. His exposition needs to borrow from that of *succurrit* before it strikes home to my mind at any rate. In regard to *concurrit*, the difficulty is to see in creaturely being an act of God simultaneous with, but not to be confused with, the act of the creature. *Sic*

intelligendum est Deum operari in rebus, quod tamen ipsae res propriam habent operationem (*Summa Theologica* I, 105, 5c). The act of God is intimate and particular to each creaturely event. Formally its relation to the creature's own act is not mere parallelism. In an unconditioned act of Fatherly Lordship, God establishes the act of the creature precisely as the act of the creature. If we try to say something about *how* this happens, and work with the analogy of inter-creaturely acts, we fall away into a "mechanistic" picture, or else we begin to talk of "emanations" or "infusions" of the divine being. This particular Christian doctrine of the divine *concursus*, which matters so much, yet is so hard to state, makes sense only with the belief that in every creaturely event there is an *encounter* of two radically different realities, an encounter such as we know about in our own meeting with God by means of His Word and Spirit. Can we understand the general working of God, with and over His creatures, from that focus? It is the obligation to do so which faith recognises (though theology tries to find other grounds), which has produced the elements of this doctrine—that all creaturely being is good, and to the glory of God, and directly produced by His action out of the richness of His grace, and yet is produced as the proper act of the creature, achieved in genuine freedom and spontaneity. We say something significant about God's action in these terms, without needing to pretend that we have probed the secret of its mode (for the secret of our incorporation into the covenant of Grace by God's Word and Spirit remains a secret until the *Parousia*), and without needing to detract from the sole glory of God the Lord by postulating some kind of synergism in this *concursus*. And what we say does not detract from the worth and the freedom of the creature in its own right. Barth offers three pages of theological argument (cf. 166-170), drawn from the Reformed tradition as opposed to all others, which may be of service to those who have an "anxiety-complex" about human freedom vis-à-vis the sovereignty of God; but he points out that because this is an instance of demon-possession and not a mere intellectual difficulty, his arguments can only avail to speed the departing demon on its way. Its actual casting out comes only by prayer and fasting. So much for *concurrit*. In regard to *succurrit* we are in the realm of the consequences or effects of creaturely action, over which

the creature has manifestly little if any control. Do we lapse into resignation in respect of all this? Or is there ground for trust, confidence, and hope? It depends ultimately on what you can say about the action of God, and the freedom and Lordship with which He acts, subsequent to the creature's own act. The Christian story, taken seriously, requires you to say of God: *succurrit.*

It is the exposition of the third aspect, *gubernatio*, of God's Fatherly Lordship over His creation, which brings most clearly into view the truth acknowledged in the doctrine of Providence. What we see when we look at the world is not God's government of creaturely life, but rather a nexus of necessities and freedoms or contingencies which defies our imperialist will to comprehend. God rules creaturely life, in and through what we see, and He rules effectively as Lord, with His own self and His own glory as the goal for creatures. We cannot see this, but we may and must believe it because we believe the Biblical witness to the "Kingdom of God". What we say about the government of the cosmic scene is securely based only if we are able to relate it to the action of the King of Israel and to the Kingdom of God taken in its full New Testament sense. The older Protestant theology shows a cleavage at this point between Lutheran tradition, which is so anxious to rule out the Stoical thesis of government by Fate that it lies open to the charge of Occasionalism, and Calvinist tradition, which is more anxious about the Epicurean thesis of Chance and therefore lays itself open to the charge of rigid determinism. Neither charge can be fully sustained. But one must take due account both of the triumphs of *common-sense* (referred to in the German text by the English phrase) in which the bourgeois finds the most congenial manifestations of the Kingdom, and of the eccentricities of waywardness or miracle which make the gypsy as well as the bourgeois a servant of the Kingdom.

The action which faith attributes to God is one of *ruling* something other than Himself, which takes place by an *ordering* of all things through His presence with them both as planner and plan. It is a direct action of God in each separate event, where He gives to the creature a prescribed opportunity of freedom, decrees the effect of its act, and gives it its own validity and worth. But this means in practice its *co-ordination* with its

environment, so that out of individual specialities a significant *unity* is secured. It is the glory, not the shame, of creatures to be utterly dependent upon God the King, though this glory is misconstrued where the notion of absolute dependence is taken abstractly as the key to creaturely existence, and grossly misrepresented where the creature is regarded as utterly dependent on the Whole within which it is ordered.

In fact we cannot pretend to maintain a thesis like this as though it were a self-authenticating idea, or a formal notion to be established prior to any content it may receive from faith in God as the King of Israel. The history of Israel is the place where the government of God is concretely revealed, and it is a history which happens, not for the sake of Israel in itself, but as the "inner ground" of all world-history. It is a history (from Abraham to Christ) which serves as a stock on to which all other nations are grafted, and once we read its true meaning we find that all world-history begins to look like a river, not like "the endless wave-beats of an unbounded, colourless, formless sea, each part of it like the rest, flowing out of itself, and being sucked back into itself". We begin to picture it on the analogy of a life-history of plant, or animal, or man, or as a work of art; not as a meaningless sphere whose points are interchangeable. The covenant-history of Israel, seen from its centre where the King appears in His beauty, is the place where the true "economy" or "disposition" of creatures under the rule of God appears openly, and though the same economy is hidden outside this place, we are constrained to believe that it is real. *This* economy is the case wherever creatures live. The King of Israel, Jesus Christ, is Lord over all. We know *that* this is so. We do not know *how* it is so, and therefore we must acknowledge that His rule continues beyond the focal events, still in the form of a hidden *Heilsgeschichte* which comes into the open only in the once-for-all history of Israel which culminated in the Ascension of the King, and the appointment of the Apostles (from the seed of Israel).

But what about the Church, and the Bible? What about the continued history of *the Jews*, which is of the same significance? These are constant elements in the panorama of world-history which serve as reminders of how the whole world is under the Providential government of God the King of Israel.

To draw the proper outlines of God's universal Providential government, we must attend to these signs, and read them aright. For we learn, precisely from the history of Israel, that the wise government of God is no crude affair of open power yielding unmistakable evidence of its reality in the persons of subservient puppets. The "constants" in world-history, each a sign in its own right and with its own purpose, are signs which *can be* but *need not be* read in their true significance. And this very ambiguity is part of what we may read in them. The history of the Bible, its formation, its translation, its exposition, and its effect on history; the history of the Church, with its peculiar claim that our time is now *Endzeit* where everything is ordered to the proclamation and believing of the Gospel, with its peculiar power of resistance drawn from its own experience of Yahweh's faithfulness conquering human rebellion, and its strange capacity for renewal (not *perpetuo mansura* save as *perpetuo reformanda*); the history of the Jews since A.D. 70. which testifies to the action of Israel's King by continuing in so disturbing a fashion to display the negative side of His saving act, the history of those who are "not a people" now that they are no longer Yahweh's people, who are not marked off by any clear racial distinction, nor by language, culture, religion or common history, and who nevertheless are held in being in this form of "not a people" by Yahweh who still holds to His word that "he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of mine eye": these are signs which disclose the true character of God's Providential government. The exposition of them in these pages should have far-reaching effects on other parts of theology.

Barth has added to these three well-known "constants" a fourth which is of much greater significance to the modern mind: the evidence in the structure of human life which is "given" and "taken away" either by Chance or by Fate or by God the Father who is the King of Israel. He notes how every such life is profoundly affected (or "disposed") by the time of its birth and of its death, and how it thus becomes a *unique* participation in common experience. What happens between the two limits is a *history*, which can be brought under judgment *as a whole*; and in its finite particularity, the whole of world-history is somehow focused. These facts can be read without serving in the least to remind us of the Fatherly Lordship under

which we exist, but when the King of Israel confronts us in a life which moves "from His poor manger to His bitter cross", our own condition of life shines with a new light.

Another "constant", of quite a different order, namely the angels, is referred to in this context, and the matter deferred for fuller discussion in Section 51. For Barth knows well enough that this "sign" has been overlooked deliberately in many discussions of Providence within serious Christian theology. "But one wonders whether such discussions are not also remarkable in paying little or no attention to the other constants as well!"

I am aware that I have communicated little or nothing of the real content of this all-important Section 49. But perhaps a better purpose will be served by indicating its structure rather than attempting to characterise its doctrine by neat labels drawn from the history of thought. Readers will note the absence of one familiar bit of apparatus, the distinction between general and special providence. Unless these terms can be used to point more clearly than they have done to the relation of the history of Israel and general history, Barth considers they are better dropped.

The doctrine is further clarified in a long treatment of the Christian life under the universal Lordship of God the Father, a life expressed in faith, obedience, and prayer. These matters have been sufficiently expounded by English writers, influenced by Barth, for me to pass over this section without comment.

III

And so we come to Section 50 on "the Negation", the third element which confuses the relation of God and His creatures, the "foreign body" with its queer negative reality, powerful within yet alien to the sphere of God's Fatherly government. The problem is to affirm God's Lordship over it without impairing His holiness and omnipotence. There is danger in denying its status as a "third element"; the danger to which Calvinism has not been immune, of finding causality of evil in God, and the danger which makes Pelagianism what it is, wherever it appears, of finding this causality in creatures.

There is a profound danger also of failing to recognise the real thing, and of arguing instead in terms of the "shadow side of creation", its precarious status, its tragedy and darkness,

which are not in opposition or contradiction to God, though until they are "turned to His praise" they are eloquent of the deeper hostility to His will by which creation is imperilled. To treat this shadow-side as the Negation is to defend God's cause at the wrong point and thus to leave the real Negation in power so far as we are concerned. (*The Screwtape Letters* went a long way towards making this point clear in Britain.) If you want to know what to do with the darkness which God created by dividing from it the light, you can learn from Mozart who alone in the eighteenth century seemed capable of dealing with the Lisbon earthquake. For he *heard*, though of course he did not see, the whole creation with its joy and tragedy, and heard it bathed in the *lux perpetua* of divine glory. I learn that his grave, like that of Calvin and that of Moses, is unknown; but what does a grave matter in the case of such great witnesses to God!

But how can we talk about the real thing which God's action is directed against? Barth refers us to the work of Julius Müller: *Die christliche Lehre von der Sünde*, written 1838-44 to expose the limits beyond which the Christian Monism of Schleiermacher and Hegel breaks down. And he offers his own extended examination of Leibnitz, Schleiermacher, Sartre, and Heidegger, as the most important guides for those who want to recognise the Negation for what it is.

They are all fallible guides, because the Negation is known to God alone, and He knows it in the action where the Word was made *flesh*, that is to say, a creature open to attack by the enemy, estranged from Himself and from God by coming into the context where the Negation makes human sin its point of attack against both God and His creatures. He knows it by this victorious action against it. My recognition of it comes by being conformed to this Word of God made flesh. I recognise that I am responsible for the queer reality of the Negation, by being its bearer and its agent; but no self-analysis can disclose in my experience of sin the real Evil which brings real Death in virtue of a real Devil and a real Hell. God alone knows where and what to attack, and I cannot do battle with it save under His election of grace. His command, in Jesus Christ, makes plain to me that disobedience is not mere imperfection judged by a Law, but rather guilt vis-à-vis the grace and kind-

ness of God; and this is knowledge of the Negation, acting through sin, primarily against God. Knowledge of it as active in evil and death is also granted when I see how its powerlessness has been exposed by an event of physical suffering and historical degradation. I recognise that this happened because man is fallen prey to a real Death (not merely subject to an act of dying), and to a real "physical" corruption with its own dynamism. In this "physical" mode of attack, which is just as important as the "moral" mode suggested by sin, the Negation acts primarily against the creature of God, and thus against God in a less direct way.

What account of the reality of the Negation may be offered from this foundation? I will summarise Barth's points as best I can.

(*a*) We cannot say that it "is", as we use that term of God or creatures; but because we recognise that God is confronted by it and in conflict with it, we cannot treat it as "nothing".

(*b*) Nor can we identify it with that which God and creatures "are not", for that *privatio* belongs as such to their perfection, establishing in creatures the "shadow-side" which does ultimately redound to the praise of God.

(*c*) It has no "nature" discernible *by creatures* and no existence which they can discover. They know it only by knowing God in His action against it.

(*d*) Its ontological context is the *electing action* wherein God is who He is. It is "the impossible possibility" which is given real power to threaten this action precisely by His Lordly and Sovereign rejection of it. But this is not to be understood as though its reality could be caught up by synthesis into what He wills for the ultimate purpose He pursues. Barth's doctrine is not an extreme form of dialectical system. At this point, *all* synthesis is impossible. But we must not follow the obvious alternative of treating it therefore as mere illusion or appearance.

(*e*) Privation of *grace*, rather than privation of being, indicates its character, its power to threaten, and its status as the object of God's *opus alienum*.

(*f*) God attacks it, and gives His creatures their part in the attack, by carrying through His *opus proprium*, the gracious covenant-action with man. Man's "good" is thus to cleave to the covenant-action of God; and if, Faust-like, he tries to master

the Negation himself, claiming to "know good and evil", he is himself mastered by it.

(*g*) God's zeal, wrath, and judgment, give no proper substance or content to this queer reality, but they do give it the perverse "truth" of lies, the "sense" of nonsense, the grotesque "possibility" of the impossible. But it has no stability, and, so far from being a permanently "necessary" element in God's design (which we are always tempted to say by some kind of synthesis), it is in fact finished, a truth still to be revealed, but which our joy and freedom can already proclaim.

Those who see it clearly see it fearlessly, and they alone see its true fearfulness. They see only the echo or shadow of a ruined reality, but they recognise it to be effective even as such. And if you use the concept of "God's permissive will" to theologise about it, the content of this permissive will is simply that we do not yet see the Kingdom of God in open glory, and until we do, this echo of a ruined reality is made to serve His purpose by an act of royal Providence which no synthetic thinking can comprehend.

An account of Section 51 will appear in the next issue. The nature of the subject-matter, as well as consideration of space, make such a division appropriate.

ALTERING THE ORDER OF PUBLIC WORSHIP

by The Rev. ANDREW HERRON

It is commonly accepted as a basic principle of Presbyterianism that the conduct of public worship belongs exclusively to the Minister under authority of the Presbytery. Strictly speaking the position is that matters entering into the actual performance of public worship or the administering of ordinances are the business of the Presbytery and the Minister is recognised as the executive officer of the Presbytery. What this amounts to in all ordinary cases is that there is vested in the Minister the entire responsibility for the ordering of the Service—a very grave responsibility indeed.

This principle, certainly, has never been envisaged as implying any measure of licence granted to the Minister either to alter at will or to experiment with the usages of the Service. It does, however, very definitely imply, on the one hand, that if for any reason changes are to be introduced into the Service the onus for initiation must be borne by the Minister, and, on the other hand, that if change is neither necessary nor desirable it is the Minister who must accept responsibility for so deciding.

To reach this latter decision to-day would require, surely, a thoroughly dyed-in-the-wool conservative. It will be readily granted that man's fundamental needs are the same to-day as they were two thousand years ago, and that Jesus Christ is the only answer in Scotland now as He was then by the quiet ways of Galilee. But man feels his needs differently to-day; twentieth century man puts his questions in a different way and if the answer is to appeal to him it, too, must be phrased in different language. There was never any hesitation in altering the language of the Gospel as it crossed the continents—must not the language of public worship be changed again and again as the Evangel crosses the centuries? Can we believe that a Service which brought the peace of God to a Victorian congregation is going, precisely as it stood then, to be potent to do the same for a twentieth century congregation still sore from the wounds

of a world war? It may be worth while to turn aside for a moment to consider very briefly some of the changes in outlook of these two bodies of people and in particular to notice how these changes seem to call for, at the least, an altered emphasis in the Services of public worship.

For one thing we are dealing with a generation that is rapidly abandoning individualism and is striving towards the enjoyment of some kind of community life. Instead of the great cities with their heterogeneous hordes of individuals packed indiscriminately together, we are coming to have housing estates, each with its community centre and its consciousness of communal responsibility. Never since the break-up of the parish after the Industrial Revolution has there been so definite a move towards "community". Congregations are ceasing to be mere collections of worshippers and are becoming worshipping communities. Do our ordinary Services make sufficient allowance for the expression of this spirit? Do not we need to capture the element of *public* in our public worship?

For another thing we are to-day dealing with a generation that is fast throwing off the shackles of rationalism. We are, in fact, suffering from some of the excesses of a rebound from rationalism. It is questionable whether any civilised people has ever been more completely in the throes of magic and superstition, whether gambling and astrology have ever had more followers. Man has found that rationalism was utterly wrong when it spoke about a friendly universe and a steadily developing knowledge and a growing power to arrange life; and it is little wonder if in worship above all things he looks for a recognition of the wholly-other and the awesome.

For yet another thing, humanism is to-day a spent force. Time was when it was fashionable to accept all that religion had to say about man's worth and dignity and to reject its entire teaching about his utter dependence upon God. Increasingly it is being recognised that man divorced from God is a remarkably unlovely and unlovable character, powerless to save himself. Should it surprise us, then, if worshippers to-day find themselves out of sympathy with a Service built very largely around an essay in ethics and whose principal purpose seems to be to underline the moral lessons contained therein.

Not only is it necessary thus to recognise that man is a

creature who in the last fifty years has altered very radically in his mental outlook; we must also realise that he is living in a totally different environment and is subjected to influences unknown in the days of his grandfather. Our average church-members to-day have survived, with varying measures of success, one, or even two, world wars; they have had their brains accustomed to the optical appeal of a highly specialised film industry primarily concerned with box-office returns, and no less to the aural appeal of a radio that must think more of entertaining than of educating; they have been victims of all kinds of high-power propaganda and of top-pressure advertising; more and more they are being subjected to social services which as they increase in scope and efficiency are steadily taking from life its chances and its choices, its opportunites for individual initiative and responsibility. Is it reasonable to expect that such people are to be won by a message that was framed to appeal to their grandfathers?

More than we should generally be prepared to admit, and certainly more than we should like to think, the explanation of the neglected church pew is to be found in the fact that worship has not kept pace with a changing world. That, certainly, is a controversial issue, but this much is beyond dispute. The men and women with whom we are dealing to-day have changed very considerably from their grandfathers (whether for better or worse is beside the point) while the average Church Service has in the past fifty years altered very little. Are, then, our Services to be altered? And if so to what extent and in what directions? The Presbytery to whom it belongs will be remarkably unhelpful; and so upon the Minister must fall the grave responsibility of determining what kind of service he is going to conduct, what elements or moments are to be present in it, in what order they are to come, what comparative emphases they are to carry, and so on. While, to make his position even more difficult, he knows that if he sets his face steadfastly against any innovations there will not be wanting those who will dub him "stick-in-the-rut" and say he is failing to capture the churchless because he refuses to move with the times; whereas if he ventures to alter, to introduce new ideas and novel practices, there will surely arise a cry that he is "just a cheap showman" ready to sacrifice the dearest traditions of his

congregation in the attempt to draw a crowd. An awkward situation, surely.

We take it that the average Minister is brave enough to be undaunted by such criticisms, or at least that he is fatalist enough to recognise that he will be criticised any way and that he must make up his own mind in the matter before any reference to popular opinion. Is he to consider introducing alterations? If so what changes is he to make? And, most important of all, where is he to find a norm by which to test the validity of any practice he may feel inclined to introduce? Obviously it is not a case where he may suit his own private taste or pander to his own peculiar susceptibilities. It is public worship with which he is dealing, and there must surely be some objective standard by which that may be judged. Where is such a norm to be found?

The first answer to suggest itself is that a suitable norm might be "Divine Appointment" or "Scripture Warrant". These have been employed as a norm in another context and they merit serious consideration. While being very conscious of the importance of these standards we cannot help feeling that they are of use to us in our present problem more in a negative than in a positive fashion—that is to say, they indicate to us the things we just cannot allow, the thou-shalt-nots of public worship, but they do not help us in choosing the best out of a variety of possibles. They forbid certain elements, but they leave us with a range of possibilities as bewildering as it is wide. As a general principle we may say that nothing must be permitted in worship which is contrary to the teaching of Scripture or out of conformity with what we believe would be the mind of Christ, but how little help that must afford to one who is wondering whether to introduce the repetition of the Creed into his Communion Service or who is puzzling whether to end the Prayer of Intercession with the Lord's Prayer or with an Ascription of Glory. Scripture authority and divine appointment most certainly are norms, but they are not the norm for which we are here in search.

A second suggestion which readily comes to mind as providing a norm is expressed in the word Catholicity. Presbyterianism is a part of the Holy Catholic or Universal Church and as such has the same roots from which have sprung the

life of every Christian communion throughout the world. We are not ashamed of our parentage, and we are desirous in our Services to keep in line with the usages of the Holy Catholic Church. At the same time we must insist that we have at all times the right—and may on occasion have the duty—of introducing elements into our Services of public worship which may not be acceptable to other Christian communions. While it is our desire to come into ever closer unity with other communions, we are not prepared to accept it as either necessary or desirable that there should be complete uniformity within the Christian Church. For one thing our emphasis upon the priesthood of all believers with the consequent insistence that Services shall be conducted by a Minister and not mediated by a Priest, at once throws us out of line with the fundamental conception of a Service of public worship in many other communions. It may therefore be said that our particular doctrinal standards forbid our accepting Catholicity as an absolute norm. It has to be said, further, that if Catholicity were so accepted there would be an end to all advance. If every new proposal is to be subjected to the test of whether it can become the universal practice of the Church, or whether it has always been done everywhere, then it is foredoomed. It is good we should keep the faith once delivered to the saints, but it is good also that we should be willing to follow as we are led into all truth. Still further in this regard it has to be said that Catholicity as a norm ignores the very real and deep differences that separate congregations. Such differences are to be found within the narrow compass of a single village—how much more true is it as between, say, a congregation of highly cultured folk in a Scottish university town, and a congregation recently won out of heathenism in Central Africa? It is just not reasonable to suppose that a Service the same in every detail should be the perfect vehicle for expressing the worship of these so different groups. Catholicity is a desirable attribute of all we do in public worship, but it must not be taken as a norm to determine the nature of our worship.

This last point seems to offer a helpful suggestion. For all through this paper we have found ourselves speaking about the differing needs of particular congregations and the varying susceptibilities of the individual. This leads us to ask whether

an absolute standard is worth looking for or whether we should not rather take as our norm the test of edification. The Service which serves the highest spiritual good of the worshippers is the best Service for them. With this norm we can never judge a Service *in vacuo* but must always assess it as the vehicle of worship of a particular group of people. Thus a certain Service may satisfy the demands of Scripture warrant and be in the very best Catholic tradition, but if it does not make for the edification of this particular congregation then it is to that extent a bad Service *in that place*. (You may well say that this is due to a deficiency on the part of the worshippers, but apportioning blame for a fact never does anything to alter the fact.)

One or two things fall to be said about this norm of edification.

First of all it must be repeated that we clearly recognise that this is not an absolute standard by which judgment can be passed finally and conclusively upon a form of worship as such, but there must always be a reference to a particular congregation. This, however, need not be a condemnation. We can have absolute standards for weighing ham or for measuring string, but for the things of the spirit absolute standards are bound to fail, for the absolute is that which cannot grow or change, that which has ceased to live—and you cannot measure the living in terms of the dead. Worship is not an accumulation of prayers, readings of Scripture, singing of praises, etc.; worship is the congregation praying and reading and singing, and the test of a Service which omits any reference to the congregation is to that very extent invalidated. Each Service, then, must be judged in reference to the congregation for whom it is intended.

Secondly it must be said, and that very emphatically, that in applying this test of edification we are thinking of the character of the Service of public worship and are not thinking of the doctrinal standards upon which it is based. The latter are absolute and their acceptability to the individual worshipper does not enter into consideration. Our worship must conform to New Testament standards, it must be in accord with the Spirit of Christ, but within these limits there is room for a variety as wide as the variety in the spirit of man.

Thirdly we must deny the implication that we are seeking

in a Service merely to please the individual worshipper. Edification does not mean tickling the palate nor pandering to the whim; it means finding a Service which shall be for the worshipper a means of grace, which shall bring him into the very presence of the Highest, which shall enable him to unburden his sin and find refuge from his sorrows. And no one has claimed that this need be a pleasant experience. We are reminded of the story of the member who complained to his minister, "I didn't enjoy your sermon this morning," and was instantly told, "That's good, you weren't meant to." When we seek to edify we are not cheapening worship by pandering to the individual, but are striving to enrich it by making it such that through it each single worshipper shall be able to find communion with God.

But, in the fourth place, we must protest against the opposite extreme of imagining that a Service which merely irritates and annoys the people thereby does them much good. One has known the minister who makes it his boast that he has set his parish by the ears by innovations in worship and who seems to believe he has thereby done his people an inestimable service. The worshipper who for whatever reason is put out of sympathy with the Service is likely to miss the blessing which is its object. Which, of course, raises the question we have so far avoided but can elude no longer—the question: What is the purpose of the Service of public worship?

There are two answers that may be returned to this question depending upon whether one thinks of worship from the point of view of man or of the Deity—two answers which are, accordingly, not competitive but complementary. The former view maintains that worship is an offering and a sacrifice to God. The history of worship shows that it began as an occasion of sacrificing a burnt-offering and that it has all along centred on such an act of offering, so that even in the highest exemplification of all worship, the celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, there is the moment when the worshippers offer and present themselves, their souls and bodies, to be a living sacrifice. A Service of public worship is something given to God: whether the worshipper likes it or enjoys it or approves of it does not particularly matter, this specific act at this specific time is an offering which has to be made. Even, indeed, though

the bulk of the worshippers may be absent this in no way invalidates the act of worship. The latter view, on the other hand, sees public worship as it affects the participant and would accordingly describe it as a means of grace, one of the most free of all the channels whereby the grace of God may come pouring wave upon wave into the human soul. Or, to change the metaphor, it is a lead-in wire by which the power of God flows into and charges the batteries of our souls. Seen thus it matters intensely that the worshippers should be all with one accord in one place and that the Service should be such that they can whole-heartedly participate in it. It is still a sacrifice, but it is one to which each worshipper must contribute, it is not merely a sacrifice which he watches the priest provide and offer on his behalf.

As has been said, these two views are really complementary and must both be included in any adequate definition of public worship. To emphasise one side to the exclusion of the other leads inevitably to error. The former view held to the exclusion of the latter (as is sometimes done by high churchmen) can lead to an insistence on the importance of the priestly office that would seem to relieve the ordinary lay believer of all responsibility for his own salvation. The latter view carried to extremes (as has been done in some of the "free" denominations) can leave God altogether out of the picture and encourage the most appalling spiritual excesses and indecencies.

Our primary interest, however, is not to find a satisfactory definition of worship but to find whether, worship being what it is, the norm of edification is a satisfactory one for testing the practices of public worship, and it is to this that we must now turn. To begin with the second definition of worship it must be obvious that on this view it matters very much whether the various elements in a Service are such that the worshipper can whole-heartedly identify himself with them. Any moment in the Service with which he is utterly out of sympathy will be like a spot of resistance in the wire interrupting the free flow of the spiritual electricity we call grace. What is even more interesting, however, is to realise that on the other view of worship any unedifying element in the Service will constitute an obstacle to the proper response of the worshipper and to that extent will spoil his sacrifice. Even on the most "high"

view it must be borne in mind that the priest merely *offers* a sacrifice which must be *provided* by the worshippers, and if the sacrifice is for any reason blemished it cannot be acceptable to God.

It would seem, then, that no matter how we look upon the meaning and purpose of public worship edification is a suitable norm to apply in determining the character of the Service to be followed in any specific circumstances.

So far we have spoken largely in theoretical terms about this theme: what most ministers desire is practical guidance. Let us try, therefore, to think of some of the practical implications involved in thus judging Services by the norm of edification.

For one thing it appears to us that the minister has a duty to teach about worship. He should explain to his people the reasons for and the meaning behind every element in the Service. This particularly applies where an addition or alteration is proposed. Even the most self-explanatory act can become a better instrument for the expression of the believers' worship when it is properly and fully understood. A partial understanding or a complete misunderstanding of the history and meaning of the various moments in the Service can easily lead to their being worthless as means of grace because they appear, however mistakenly, popish or street-corner, new-fangled or out-of-date. A good craftsman explains the use and the possibilities and the history of every tool he puts into his apprentice's hand: in like manner the minister must ensure that his people know what their Service means, what its various acts are intended to convey. So it shall become for them more thoroughly edifying, a better medium for the expression of their adoration, a more perfect channel for the inpouring of God's grace.

Secondly it seems to us that the minister who accepts edification as the norm for worship will be prepared to go very slowly in changing the traditional Order of Service of his congregation. He will realise that what he has to do is not merely to introduce a new and better kind of Service, what he has to do is nothing less than to build up a response on the part of his people to that Service; and while the former can be done quickly the latter takes time. If you are so minded you can introduce into your Service three new hymns a Sunday (so long, at least, as the book holds out) but it is only one or two

new hymns a year that you will persuade your people to take to their hearts and make their own. Similarly with changes in the traditional Service, slow but sure is a sound motto.

Thirdly we should say that the minister must be prepared to make concessions to the taste, however depraved he may think it, of the bulk of his people. While it is abundantly true that the conduct of public worship is a province where the Kirk Session has no jurisdiction, and while that point may be made clear to them, there is surely ample room for consultation between the minister and a body which is at least supposed to be representative of the congregation on a subject of such vital importance to every member. To us it seems a great pity that cases should come before Presbyteries and Synods where congregations are accusing their minister of causing division through innovations in public worship. Surely such an atmosphere cannot be conducive to edification, surely the spirit of worship must be sadly lacking from such Services, however admirable they may be as models for worship.

While this is said it must be emphasised, in the fourth place, that the responsibility for initiating any changes lies with the minister. It is not enough that he should say, "There is here, so far as I can see, no widespread demand for any change; the people who come seem thoroughly satisfied with things as they are." He has a duty to ask, "What about the people who don't come? May it be that an altered Service would bring them?" Members may appeal to the higher courts against being rudely shaken out of a rut that had become dear to them; they are not likely to appeal against being allowed to sleep on in peace. There are times (and to us it seems the present is one of them) when changes are necessary, and the responsibility for so deciding and for taking appropriate action must lie with the minister.

In the fifth place we would again draw attention to the fact that edifying must not be confused with pleasing, and that the search for a form of Service that shall satisfy the demands of edification must on no account be equated with the search for that elusive attribute called popularity. There have been many popular Services in the history of the Church and we know how long they continued to satisfy even that debased standard. It is not that we must give people what they want: it is that we

give them what they need and at the same time convince them of their need, so that they are not given but themselves take, are not spectators at a Service, however pleasant, but are participants in an act of worship, however humiliating.

And sixthly and lastly, there must, it seems to us, be room even within a united Church for a fairly wide diversity in the practice of public worship. Unity must never be confused with uniformity. Saint John the Divine saw the City of God with twelve gates that believers might enter from every airt. We must have as wide a selection of gates if all are to enter the presence of God through public worship.

FURTHER THOUGHTS ABOUT BAPTISM

by The Rev. JAMES BARR

In the discussion concerning the doctrine of baptism two fairly clear and steady datum-points are provided by the views of the Roman Catholic and Baptist Churches respectively.

The basis of the Roman Catholic doctrine can be seen in a phrase from the decisions of Trent (Denzinger, 792)—"... *gratiam, quae in baptismate confertur*". Baptism confers grace. The conferring of grace, accompanied by the remission of sins (in particular of original sin), the infusion of virtues, the impression of a new stamp or character—all this is comprised in the *effectus baptismatis*. "*Generalis efficacia mortis Christi, quae per baptisma applicatur pariter omnibus baptizatis*" (Conc. Vienn., 1312; Denz. 482). Baptism is conceived as an operation which has effects, which does something, which has at its command the power, namely grace, by which it acts. The grace is "sacramental grace", a power conveyed by the operation; and its effect is "baptismal regeneration".

For a Biblical doctrine of baptism this kind of thinking must be rejected. It exemplifies the fatal tendency of Roman Catholic thought to separate grace from the person of Christ, so that it becomes a kind of force or influence or potency, subject in some degree to ecclesiastical manipulation in practice and to scholastic manipulation in theology. The true Biblical thought is surely that grace is always the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and is in Him, and in Him only; grace is not something separate, which belongs to Christ, but is Christ Himself. We cannot therefore speak of grace as a "thing" which can be "conferred"; nor can we split it up into separate compartments, one of which can be termed "sacramental grace". A man does not "confer" love upon his wife, but he loves her; and that love is an indivisible unity, and is inseparable from the direct will of the loving person; the emphasising of this analogy is the contribution of the Song of Songs to Christology. Baptism, then, should not be thought of as "effecting" or "conferring" anything; and though baptism may be called a "means of grace",

let it not be thought of as a "sacramental grace", as if it were a type of grace, a type of influence, bound to the sacramental operation rather than to the living person of Christ who *is* grace.

We may turn now to the Baptist position. In it, as is generally familiar, faith must precede baptism; the individual must be of years of discretion and a truly converted believer, before he can be baptised. The purpose of baptism, in the words of the New Hampshire Baptist Confession of 1853, is "to show forth, in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Saviour, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life". This view of baptism is, however, only part of a general view of the Church. The idea of the Church as an institution is completely eliminated. There is one sole frontier between Church and world, namely the experience of conversion. Apart from this fact and experience of conversion, there is no sense in which a person can be said to "belong to the Church". This necessarily involves rather a sharp critique of other denominations; for in one like the Church of Scotland, for example, we should have merely a great organisation or society. Of this only a certain inner ring really belong to the Church, i.e. through conversion, and the rest are only nominally Christians or Church members. Along with such a critique goes the practice of rebaptism of those converted in adult years and desiring to enter the Baptist Church. There is then one single sharp and distinct frontier between Church and world—conversion to personal faith; we shall shortly return to a criticism of this idea; and shall argue that the Bible does not hold so naive, simple and unambiguous a view of the division between Church and world.

Moreover, on the Baptist view of the sacraments, one finds it hard to see any need for sacraments at all. In the Baptist confessional statements we find phrases of this type: "By it the believer expresses his love for Christ, his faith and hope in Him" (Freewill Baptist Confession, Art. 17), "to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith . . . " (quoted above); "the members of the Church, by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ" (New Hampshire Conf.). In other words, the emphasis is not that we receive anything in the sacraments, but that in them, by the strength of our own faith, we represent and celebrate

its object. Not only are the sacraments mere signs, representations, or commemorations; they are signs, representations and commemorations which have their reality and validity only from a source within the believer, from his faith, and not from without. It was no doubt against such an outlook that the Scots Confession proclaims: "and we utterlie damne the vanitie of they that affirme Sacramentes to be nathing ellis but naked and baire signes". Surely the words of institution, "Take, eat", to say nothing of chapters like John 6, emphasise that the Lord's Supper is a receiving of a precious gift and not a pious exercise or outworking of what is already in the believer. The Baptist stress on faith as active in the enjoyment of the sacrament is one that thinks not of faith as the gift of God being received, but of faith as the possession of the believer, active on its own and expressing itself.

The appeal of the Baptists, however, is insistently to New Testament usage, and in these pages Professor T. W. Manson has been rightly criticised[1] for turning from Biblical authority to the argument *a praxi ecclesiae*. Such an argument is impossible for the Church Reformed according to the Word of God. A Church which emancipates itself from scriptural control on the authority of its own experience and practice is a Church without authority, autonomous, a law unto itself. It remains true, however, that New Testament usage, as far as the single point of infant baptism goes, is equivocal. As far as actual examples go, the New Testament seems to support both sides equally; for while no baptisms of children are mentioned, no more do we find adult baptisms of the sons and daughters of parents already Christian; and this silence has its own good reason in that our only historical sources, the Acts of the Apostles and the Pauline Epistles, are documents of the mission field, where the question of infant baptism might not arise or where occurrences of it might not demand historical recording so early. It would seem that the *onus probandi* lies upon those who deny infant baptism, for the occurrence of adult baptisms does not prove that there were no infant baptisms as well. Cullmann's recent work, which suggests an intentional reference to baptism in the well-known "Suffer the little children to come to me", may not be positive proof, but must at least carry considerable

[1] *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 51.

weight. Apart from Romans 6, which we shall discuss later, we might mention one other passage, the first section of 1 Cor. 10. "All our fathers", says St. Paul, "were baptised into Moses in the cloud and the sea; all enjoyed the sacraments of the manna and the rock . . . but God was not well pleased with them all, for they were strewn as corpses in the desert . . . on one day 23,000 fell. . . ." The lesson is very emphatically that the *whole people* were baptised, but only some entered into God's good-will, and the rest suffered His judgment. All were baptised. And, says Paul, their situation was like ours—*ταῦτα δὲ τύποι ἡμῶν ἐγενήθησαν*. The suggestion seems to be that *μετάνοια* of the heart, resulting in good works (this is what is in question, vv. 6-11), has not necessarily preceded baptism. At any rate, over the New Testament field as a whole, we cannot grant that there exists a basis of proof for the Baptist position.

We may now turn to some thoughts towards a constructive view of baptism; and as we do so, we have as landmarks the two opposed doctrines of the Roman Catholics and the Baptists. On the one hand we see a view of baptism based on a doctrine of grace which is unbiblical; on the other hand we cannot too readily accept the claim of the Baptists that their position is scriptural; for, apart from the direct testimony of the New Testament for or against infant baptism, we see the Baptist theory of baptism to be integral to a view of the church and the sacraments which is itself doubtful. A Biblical-Reformed view will seek to avoid both these aberrations. There are now certain prolegomena by which we must seek to clarify our thinking and seek to defend ourselves from mistakes.

There is one mode of thinking, hallowed by antiquity and tradition, which we have to use only with care; namely, the practice of thinking in terms of "sacraments" generally, and perhaps even of deducing doctrine from the general concept of a sacrament. As Barth points out in his lectures on the Heidelberg Catechism, the Bible says nothing about "sacraments" and speaks simply of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The word "sacrament" has become almost overloaded by constant theologising. To take for example the maxim *nullum sacramentum sine fide*, not infrequently quoted[1] as implying a denial of infant baptism; on what grounds is this statement made? The Bible

[1] *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 55.

makes no such general statement about "sacraments". Historically, no doubt, the reference of the maxim was above all to the medieval sacramental system; but in the context of Protestant theology the grounds of the statement are in fact these: that *for the Lord's Supper* it is only by faith that the bread and wine are the body and blood of the Lord; to the person without faith, whether or not we allow that the ritual is for him a sacrament at all, the benefits of the sacrament are absent. But what entitles us to transfer this fact to baptism also? How can we say so dogmatically that what is clearly the case in the Lord's Supper must equally be the case in baptism? There is surely no universal *law of sacraments* to which both would conform in exactly the same way. We cannot in this way argue from the Lord's Supper to baptism, at least not without care. One cannot help feeling that most of our thinking about sacraments (to continue with this term, as no doubt we always shall) is actually drawn from the Lord's Supper, and applied arbitrarily to baptism when it suits us; baptism, as the poor relation, does not receive anything like the attention in our thinking about sacraments which the Lord's Supper has. How little we think about our own baptism many years ago, how very much more do we look forward to our celebrations of Communion! At any rate, let us beware of drawing conclusions too easily from the general idea of a sacrament or from the Lord's Supper alone, and forcing those conclusions upon the institution of baptism. I would suggest that the truly enlightening way to view them is not by the points which the two have in common, but by the points in which the two differ; the difference between the Lord's Supper and baptism is as much enlightening and stimulating as the similarity.

Let us turn to consider the idea of a "sign" in this connexion. We must all agree in regarding the sacraments in some sense as being signs. Augustine, Calvin, the Council of Trent, the Baptists, all use the language "sign, symbol, emblem". But everything depends upon the content of this term: how much is implied when we use the word "sign"? Against the Roman Catholic idea of a sacrament as an operation which by its working conveys or confers the effect of grace, we have to say that the sacraments are "only signs". They are not in themselves operations, but signs displaying and representing the work

of God. But we cannot stop here. We cannot say "only signs" as if this were something depreciatory—and this is the unfortunate tendency of the Baptist and other "low" views of the sacraments. At this point we have to turn to the Bible; and we see that the Bible regards a sign (Hebr. אוֹת, Gk. σημεῖον) as something charged with tremendous significance and *eternal* import. We may think of how Isaiah speaks of the "setting up of banners" and of "ensigns"; one quotation—"it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off" (55.13). Again, we have the cross marked on the forehead of the faithful in Ezekiel 9; only a sign, indeed, nevertheless the sign is the determinant factor between life and death. Or there are the σημεῖα of the Fourth Gospel; only signs, but one such sign was the raising of the dead Lazarus. In this sense we can almost say that the Cross itself was a sign, a σημεῖον. There is nothing docetic about signs in the Bible. One can almost say, that the whole activity of God is the planting of signs along the history of mankind, and one cannot help feeling that the reference of these signs is not only manward but Godward; the sign is set in the midst of mankind not so much for men's edification as in order that God may witness to Himself and for Himself; God sees the sign which He Himself has planted, and is faithful to it, whether man sees it or not. The most notable example is the rainbow, Gen. 9.16: "The bow shall be in the cloud, and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature . . . ". God sees His own sign, and is well pleased. Surely this is the primary way in which we see the Cross; God sees the Cross, and is faithful because of it, is well pleased in it; only secondarily, and only because of this primary fact, is it the case that man also sees the Cross and is made faithful by it. I suggest that it is with this rich and glorious conception of "signs" before our eyes that we should look upon the institution of baptism. God has instituted this act in order that through His Church there may be set up among men a sign for the sake of which God wills to be faithful. The sign is a sign for God, whether man is faithful or not; just as the Cross was full atonement for the sins of the world, whether we believe in it or not. As long as we seek to find in baptism merely a sign for men, we empty it of its content; it is only when we see it as a sign

for God and for His faithfulness that it can call forth a real response of faithfulness on our part.

While we deal with this point, let us clearly realise that the one central reference of baptism is to the events of the first Easter, to the death of Christ and His rising from the dead. The emphasis is a looking backward, to what has already happened, and to what has happened only *once*, ἐφάπαξ. Let us realise the relation of the death and resurrection of Christ to our faith: He died and rose once, whether we believe or not. This work is entirely antecedent to our faith. First His death, then only subsequently, if at all, our faith. I believe that baptism, whether of infants or not, must be clearly understood to reproduce this relationship. We must therefore emphatically renounce any practice of rebaptism after conversion, such as is practised by the Baptists. This would suggest that Christ died twice, once to make atonement for us and a second time to convert us. On this particular point a much more correct position is held by the Roman Catholics, who do not rebaptise converted heretics. It is essential to see that we are not baptised into our faith or into our conversion, but into the death and resurrection of Christ, which events are as a rock that stands whether or not our faith should fail. It is possible that the practice of infant baptism is more true to the work of Christ, by reproducing this relationship, than a practice of believers' baptism which may obscure the antecedence of Christ's work to faith. And we may note that our argument here need not appeal to any *gratia praeveniens*, a somewhat questionable doctrine by the mention of which Barth tries to nullify this whole argument.

We may now turn to quite another point, and plead for a consideration of the witness of the Old Testament. This has too often been confined to one particular detail, i.e. the practice of circumcision, and its use as an analogy for baptism. But in fact, on a larger scale, the Old Testament contains a very rich and fully developed doctrine of the Church and its relation to the world. That there are dangers in too facile a use of the Old Testament may be admitted: such dangers as the complete identification of the Old Israel with the New, or the relating of baptism to alleged "Christian nations" or "Christian civilisation", with dangerous ideological consequences; but the

existence of such dangers should not deter us from a careful study of the Old Testament witness.

What we have in the Old Testament is this: we have God's people, Israel, a people separated off from the nations of the world by the divine institution of circumcision, betokening the divine calling and separation, the election or ἐκλογή. This people, as thus called out and separated and elect, is the ἐκκλησία, the Church. The institution of circumcision forms the frontier between Church and world, Israel and the Gentiles. But, it soon becomes apparent, within the ἐκκλησία itself there is a denial of the God of Israel, and only a certain small remnant (שְׁאֵרִית), known to God Himself, is really faithful. It is only in this small remnant that the divine calling is truly heard, and the divine separation accomplished. There is, therefore, one may say, a double frontier between Church and World. There is the frontier between the Gentiles and Israel, a frontier set by the divine institution; and there is the frontier between Israel in general and the faithful remnant, a frontier set κατ' ἐκλογὴν χαρίτος (Rom. 11).

Just so we have still a double frontier, one set by the institution of baptism, the other set likewise by election, by faith, by conversion. But let us note one or two further points of importance. The Remnant is never an institution; there remains to the end only one institution, the people of Israel distinguished by their circumcision, and they are God's only people and God's only institution whether they belong to the faithful remnant or not. The Remnant is not an institution with its own laws, its own priests, its own prophets, etc., but is an election, an ἐκλογή existing only in the will of God and His decision. It is God who tells Elijah about the existence of the remnant; Elijah does not tell God, "Oh, I'm the prophet of the faithful remnant, trying to help these nominal Israelites"; it is by and in the will of God that the remnant exists. That is to say, the frontier between the unfaithful people and the faithful remnant is a frontier existing in God's elective will, and recognised by the faithful; but over against the other Israelites and over against the outside world the faithful can identify and describe themselves in one way only: *by the frontier set up in the divine institution*, i.e. simply as Israelites, set apart by God in His institution of circumcision and acknowledging the God of Israel. In the electing

will of God they may form a special remnant; but in themselves and in their relation to the external world all they can say of themselves is simply that they represent the one Israel of God; or in other words, in themselves and in their relation to the external world they have to regard themselves and proclaim themselves as no more than members of God's people, which people as a whole He has called and distinguished by His institution. If they are more than this, if they are people spared from the judgment of God upon His own people, then this is so only in and by the secret counsels of God.

This, I suggest, forms a basis for a true doctrine of the Church. There is a double frontier still between Church and World. There is the frontier established by the divine institution of baptism, and all we can say, as Christians facing the world, is that we belong to the people of God within this frontier, and that we acknowledge this institution to indicate that we are dead and risen with Christ; and if we, in spite of our full participation in the sins of the whole Church, are nevertheless chosen by God and counted faithful while others are not, then it is all the more our place still to stand with simplicity and humility on *this outer* frontier, and upon it alone to stand against the world. The mistake inherent in the Baptist doctrine of the Church, and in a good deal of evangelicalism generally, is an attempt to make the Remnant into an institution, to deny that Israel apart from the Remnant is ἐκκλησία at all, and to allow only one single and simple frontier between God's elect and the world; and in this way utterly to destroy the meaning of God's institution in circumcision and baptism. Roman Catholicism, we may note, tends to do the opposite, that is, to treat the institution as if it were the Remnant, to say that to the institution as such belongs the transcendent gift of divine election, to deny God the freedom to separate within the institution between wheat and tares, to deny God the freedom to create a second frontier within the first.

We may note that the doctrine of the Remnant in a sense demands that notion of an "invisible Church" so unfashionable to-day; not in the sense that broken particles have some invisible unity, but that within the visible totality of the Church or Churches there exists invisibly by divine election the chosen remnant; one can see the net, but not distinguish the good fish

from the bad, until it is drawn to shore. But the point is this: the Christian can stand against his fellows and the world only in humility, as a member of the *ecclesia*, never in pride, as a member of an *ecclesiola*.

The last of our main questions is this: how does the Christian look upon his baptism? What relation has it to the other elements of his faith? In what manner does it fit into the texture of his spiritual life? We may suggest this answer: baptism is a thing upon which we look back. As we look back upon the death and resurrection of Christ, so we look back upon our baptism. It is in this backward-looking view that baptism takes its place as the confirmer of our faith. It is in this backward-looking view that we say to ourselves, "as assuredly as I have in fact been baptised, so assuredly am I dead and risen with Christ"; it is thus that our baptism can be a great strength to us, so that we can find real comfort in the words *baptizatus sum*. Is there not some mistake if we do not see this point? Why is the fact of baptism not used as a mighty weapon of spiritual assurance and moral dynamic in our preaching and our personal lives, as it was used by St. Paul?

It is in this backward-looking view that faith is associated with, and responds to, baptism. We have already suggested that it is from God's side that the operation as such is significant; but on man's side faith has its significance not *during* the operation but in the backward look towards it. The mistake of so much theology has been to try to relate faith to the actual operation of being baptised. How, people ask, can the experience mean anything except when faith is antecedently present? But the true approach is to leave the actual operation alone and to concentrate on faith as being a backward looking to baptism. We may illustrate this from the key passage, Romans 6. "As many of us as were baptised (ὅσοι ἐβαπτίσθημεν) into Jesus Christ, were baptised into his death. Therefore we were buried with him by baptism", etc. The common exegesis is this: Paul is saying "at that time when we were being baptised, we were being buried with him", etc.—in other words, we were then experiencing identification with His death and life. This may or may not have been true, but it is not exactly what Paul is saying. He is speaking not of the faith that was *active in* the event of baptism, but of the faith which *looks back* to the event

of baptism and draws mighty conclusions from it. He says "we Christians have been baptised (aorist) and as we look back on that fact we realise it means that we have been baptised into His death, buried with Him, risen with Him". It is always in this looking back that faith is active with regard to baptism, and mightily active at that, as the argument of Romans 6 goes on to show.

Should we then baptise children? Yes, if the conditions are such that the Church will be able, through preaching, through Sunday School, through a Christian home, to point the child's mind backwards to the event of its baptism. On the foreign mission field, where things may be less settled, and perhaps chances are that the child may through circumstances not have sufficient opportunity to hear the reminding word of the Church, there is little point in baptising the child; the same applies to a child from a non-Christian home in Scotland. But we must remember, if we do baptise children, we must learn to preach and declare the message and meaning of that baptism they have received, with the power and confidence of Paul in Romans 6.

I have already implied that the true understanding of baptism and the Lord's Supper is to be found not in some common doctrine of Sacraments in general but in the almost dialectic oppositeness of the two. I may conclude by resuming this point. Baptism looks to the past, to the work of Christ in His death and rising from the dead; the Lord's Supper to the present and future, to the presence of the Ascended Christ and His Return. Baptism is the unrepeatable sacrament, referring to the once-completed work of Christ; the Lord's Supper is its repeated confirmation to us in the present age. Baptism looks to a work that was done independently of our faith, "while we were yet sinners"; the Lord's Supper to the reality that is present to us only by our present faith and hope. Baptism is primarily the sign set up in us by God for Himself, that He may be faithful; the Lord's Supper is primarily our receiving of God for ourselves, that we may be faithful.

HISTORY AND REFORMATION

by The Rev. Professor T. F. TORRANCE

In a recent publication, Professor Wladimir Weidlé of the Russian Academy in Paris has some things to say about early Christian Art which are of intense interest to the Church historian. Unlike the Christian artist of other ages, he declares, "the early Christian painter or sculptor made no attempt, even unconsciously, to let the form of his work answer in some degree to its specific religious and Christian content. . . . The form in these paintings and carvings simply carries their content, and makes no attempt to express or embody it. . . . What is most remarkable is to find this indifference not to be confined to form in the ordinary sense of the word, but to extend to the inward form—the dramatic or poetic rendering of the given subject. . . . We find no attempt made to imagine how a thing must have looked at the time when it happened. The only peculiarity here to be seen is that the inward form is, in this art, simplified and condensed to the vanishing point; something there must be, but there is as little as possible." (*The Baptism of Art*, pp. 8, 9.)

It is rather significant to find that in the Roman Catacombs the figure for the Good Shepherd may be the figure of Hermes Criophoros taken from contemporary realistic art. What matters apparently is not the painting itself or its form so much as the setting in which this is given, and the new meaning which is actually conveyed. Here the figure is simply a picture of a shepherd with a lamb on his shoulder, for the shepherd is a sign, not so much even of Christ as of what He does. He is a visible token used to convey the truth that it is Christ who saves, and that it was to save us that He came. It is a curt realistic painting in which everything seems to be eliminated, as in the New Testament parable, except what is indispensable for its import to be understood and conveyed. Such art Professor Weidlé calls *signitive*—borrowing a term applied, in another connexion by Leibniz. "For a sign", he adds, "is distinct from a symbol in this that its work is all done in passing the

meaning on. It is not concerned with expressing that meaning, or with making the sign answer to the thing signified."

A further characteristic of this early Christian art is that its theme is mainly sacramental or given in a definitely sacramental context. That helps to explain how the sign can convey meaning without embodying it in precise form, for the relation between the sign and the thing signified belongs rather to divine mystery than to a liturgy where form and content are fused. It is highly significant that from the time of the Edict of Milan this art begins to disappear until by the fifth and sixth centuries it is gone altogether, displaced by another art in which form and content are fused. It is no coincidence that this corresponds to the change in the whole face of the Church brought about by the Constantinian establishment.

To me the startling thing about the theology behind this early Christian art is the remarkable resemblance borne to it by the thought of the Reformation. Let us take, for example, Calvin's teaching about the Holy Eucharist. On the one hand he insists again and again that the purpose of the sacramental signs lies not in themselves but in that they are given to hold forth and convey Jesus Christ in His saving action. In comparison with that the signs are nothing, for they point beyond themselves and convey what can never be reduced to form. On the other hand, Calvin insists with equal emphasis that unless there is some correspondence, some element of vivid analogy, between form and content, between sign and thing signified, the whole meaning of the sacrament disappears. "The nature of the sacrament", he says, "is overthrown if in the mode of signification the earthly sign does not correspond to the heavenly reality; and accordingly, the truth of the mystery is lost if true bread does not represent the true body of Christ" (*Inst.* 4.17.4). To maintain this position Calvin had to do battle on two fronts, against the sons of the Renaissance who would separate form from content, and against the tradition of the Old Church in which form and content had become fused together. Against both of these Calvin claimed to have reached back to the view held by the pre-Nicene Church, and by Biblical and Nicene Christology to have corrected deformed notions of Church and sacrament. This claim appears to be remarkably substantiated by what Professor Weidlé and others have recently

brought to light about the Christian art of the early centuries.

There is however a notable difference. While the Christians of the second and third centuries apparently made no attempt to imagine how a thing looked at the time it happened, Calvin paid considerable attention to this, restoring to the Eucharist the character of the Lord's Supper. When we compare early Christian art with the contemporary frescoes in the Jewish Synagogue at Dura, it becomes apparent that in the former the element of narrative or history is lacking. This historical perspective, however, is precisely what Calvin sought to recover, understanding the sacrament not so much in terms of the mystery-idea of Hellenism, as in terms of divine intervention in history. This historical perspective Calvin owed, like so many of his fellow-reformers, to a fresh understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures and the light they shed upon the New Testament. The resemblance and difference between the theology of Calvin and that of the early Church can be stated thus: both held essentially the same view about the form and content of the Church's faith, but whereas in the Early Church the assimilation of the Christian sacrament to the mystery cult tended to eliminate the dynamic or historical element, which led inevitably to the Roman Mass with its fusion of form and content, Calvin sought to reform the Mass by a return to the historical perspective of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, which led inevitably to serious questions about the propriety of Greek thought-forms in the Medieval tradition.

I have dwelt at considerable length upon the relation between Calvin and the Early Church because it raises the supreme problem of the historian: the relation of history to form, but also because the whole conception of the Reformation has, I believe, considerable light to shed upon this problem. The Reformation has, in fact, two main contributions to offer in this connexion.

1. The essence of the Reformation has recently been described by Professor Pauck of the University of Chicago as "repentant willingness ever to rethink all attainments" (*The Heritage of the Reformation*, p. 38). The Reformation was a movement within the historical Catholic Church, and recognised that actual ongoing history in which God's creative and redemptive purpose is at work among men, but it recognised

also that the Catholic Church of all ages is being continually tempted to perpetuate in space and time, in statically fixed patterns and forms, its possession of the living God, who by His very nature and glory transcends all historical limitation and contingency. The Reformation stands therefore for the most vigorous protest within history against all attempts to give final historical form to the Spirit of God, against every canonisation of the divine will, against every earthly and materialistic encasement of the holy, against every confinement of the absolute in relative forms (Pauck, op. cit., p. 118). The source of this protest lies in a fresh understanding of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ and in the conflict with historical continuity which that involved. In Jesus Christ they recognised that the personal Word of God had become flesh and dwelt among men, that the Divine or Eternal is decisively active within history, not as the immanent norm of its development, but as the Lord of history whose freedom and sovereignty can never be impaired. The recognition of such an Absolute within history led to the recognition of the discontinuous element in history, for the very presence of such an Absolute means that the whole frame of historical continuity, as men are able to comprehend and interpret it, is shattered. In view of this the Reformation stands for a protest against the whole notion of history championed by the Medieval Church as the irreversible unfolding of certain eternal forms or an immanent pattern of catholicity embedded in the stream of history through the institution of the Church on earth. In other words, the Reformation protests against the fusion of form and content as applied to history, and the attempt to interpret history in terms of its alleged immanent norms or patterns of progress. In the last resort such an interpretation means the imposition by the historian upon the raw material of history of a web of forms that does not really exist. When H. A. L. Fisher wrote in the preface of his great work: "One intellectual excitement has been denied me. Men wiser and more learned than I have discerned in history a plot, a rhythm, a predetermined pattern. These harmonies are concealed from me"—he may perhaps have been blind in faith, but he was starkly honest as an academic historian.

2. The Reformation is not just synonymous with Protestant-

ism. It is much more than a protest, for it renewed within the Christian tradition the Biblical interpretation of history. The outstanding fact that has to be reckoned with is this, that although in a profound sense the presence of the Eternal within history means the disruption of historical continuity, at the same time it gives ongoing history a continuity which it never had before. The emergence of the notion of linear progress in history is itself a unique historical fact which, as Professor John Baillie has shown so clearly in his recent work (*The Belief in Progress*), is to be traced indubitably to the Hebrew-Christian tradition. That can never be denied by the Church of the Reformation. "There can be no true sense of history, and no significant historiography," writes Professor Baillie, "which is not guided by some sense of a forward-moving pattern" (op. cit., p. 166). The supreme question, however, which the Reformation forces us to ask is: What kind of pattern or form does this involve? In answer to this the Reformation calls in question the habit of the West in interpreting history exclusively in terms of Hellenic forms of thought and resuscitates another notion of form supplied by the Hebraic tradition. Greek forms have their great place in their own mainly aesthetic and intellectual sphere, but they are fundamentally alien to the stuff of history, and only suceed in robbing it of its dynamism in an artificial stabilisation. To borrow words again from Professor Baillie, they "depress history into the realm of nature" (op. cit., p. 67). How they do that Professor Macmurray has made admirably clear in his work *The Clue to History*. We need not discuss that here, but may in passing allow ourselves to be reminded again by Professor Macmurray that "it is still the influence of Greek thought-forms in our tradition that is one of the main obstacles in the way of our understanding Christianity" (op. cit., p. xi).

What then is the Hebrew-Christian or Biblical notion of *form* as applied to history? In answer we may recall again Calvin's attitude to the Roman Mass which he opposed on the ground that the form given to it, however perfect that may be to our aesthetic judgment and to our cultic sense, is actually alien to the deepest nature of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is above all the sacrament of the Word become flesh, and as such must be analogous in form to the Word. And so Calvin op-

posed to the form of the Mass the form given to it by the Word. This leads us to ask, what did Calvin mean by the Word? By Word he meant the Eternal Word who resides in the bosom of the Father, but who has also in the flesh of Jesus Christ become physical event. This is the difficult notion which our traditional habits of thought and reflection prevent us from understanding, that the Eternal Word of God is also historical event, in fact the event which has not only shattered the frame of history but gives to history a new form analogous to itself. The Word is the active intervention of God in the affairs of men through which all things are given new shape and meaning *vis-à-vis* the Kingdom of God.

It may help us to understand this more clearly if we turn aside to examine the meaning of *word* in the Biblical tradition, taking as our guide an article in Kittel's *Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament* by Professor Procksh. This Old Testament scholar points out that the Hebrew term for *word*, *dabhar*, appears to be etymologically akin to *dĕbhir* which refers to the holy of holies or the hinterground of the temple. *Dabhar* seems to have referred originally to the hinterground of a thing or an event, that is to the meaning. Every event has a hinterground of meaning which is its *dabhar*, and so the term *dabhar* comes to mean both *word* and *event* much like the Greek *rhéma*, while the plural of *dabhar* like the plural of *rhéma* may mean history. Thus the Hebrew term for *word*, *dabhar*, comprises two main elements which Professor Procksch calls the dianoetic element and the dynamic element. On its inward side, word is dianoetic; it has a hinterground of meaning. On its outward side, word is dynamic; it is historical event. These two elements may be distinguished but they cannot be separated. Strictly speaking it is only by participating in a hinterground of meaning that a thing becomes a historical event. On the other hand there is no such thing as theoretical meaning by itself, but only meaning which assumes historical form. It must be added, however, that if these two elements, the dianoetic and dynamic forms of *word*, cannot be separated, they cannot be fused either. The dianoetic element possesses an eschatological reserve by which it transcends its historical form, and will not be resolved into it without remainder. This gives the dynamic element an ambiguous character, for it is always possible to read it only

in terms of its historical form, without entering into its real hinterground of meaning, and to interpret it by a theoretical construction which is fundamentally alien to that hinterground of meaning. It is this duality which lurks in *dabhar* which is basic to the Hebrew notion of history, for history and eschatology are regarded as interpenetrating each other and as understandable only in such mutual involution. No doubt history can be given a superficial interpretation, but a true interpretation of history is reached by an understanding of its dimension in depth as disclosed through the *word*.

All this receives tremendous significance when we come to think of *word* in the Christian tradition, and particularly of the Word of God. The Word is both the eternal Word of God transcendent in history, and also the Word which in the Church of Jesus Christ has assumed historical form, so that through this Word God acts within history, and rules over the nations and kingdoms of the world. This Word was the great rediscovery of the Reformation, not Word as theoretical meaning but Word that ever passes over into history, not the Word as mere truth but the Word as the instrument whereby God Himself interpenetrates history and brings it to conform to His sovereign will. Looking back over the early course of the Reformation, Luther could say this: "All I have done is to further, preach, and teach God's Word; otherwise I have done nothing. So it happened that while I slept or while I had a glass of beer with my friend Philip and with Amsdorf, the papacy was so weakened as it never was before by the action of any prince or emperor. I have done nothing; the Word has done and accomplished everything. I let the Word do its work" (cited by Pauck, op. cit., p. 23). "So is the Kingdom of God," runs the Gospel, "as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how" (Mark 4.26, 27).

The New Testament, however, speaks about the Word as growing, and increasing, and multiplying. In other words, the Word of God as physical historical event perpetuates its historical temporal form in the Church on earth, so that through this Church the Word not only extends, so to speak, its own corporeality, but continues to be the fermenting and creative force within history. On the other hand the New Testament

never lets us forget that the Word is not bound in the fetters of historical continuity. It is quite clear that if the Word is to engage in history as the instrument of its change and order it must assume historical form, but it does this with absolute sovereignty only because it continues also to be transcendent to history, the eternal Word of God whom no form in the cosmos, theological, liturgical, ecclesiastical, can adequately express.

This is the very fact that lies at the root of the Reformation. If the Christian Revelation engages in the cosmos it uses the patterns of the cosmos while recognising that these cosmic patterns will pass away, but it uses them in order to disclose and impart through them that which cannot pass away but abides for ever. If the Christian Church therefore is to continue in history it requires historical and ecclesiastical and sociological forms in order to participate in the ongoing life of the world, yet these forms again and again prove utterly insufficient to carry the living Word of God, so that they have to be criticised by being placed under the divine judgment, and continually reformed in the pressure of the Christian mission. I can think of no better analogy to help us here than that of counterpoint, in which we may think of the Reformed conception of the Word of God as the *canto firmo* which calls the lower melodies of the Church's participation in history into added counterpoint, and where the counter-subject finds the patterns of its progress only in answer to the prime subject and in harmony with it. It is this togetherness of *canto firmo* and the counter-subject, of the eternal Word and its historical forms in the Church, which forces the Church to break the forms by which it has inevitably become participant in the movement of history, and at the same time to create fresh historical forms in order not to secede from history. If history were already redeemed it would be quite another matter, but the Church of the Reformation came to realise that in this world all historical processes are essentially involved in developing evil, so that all historical forms, no matter how good in themselves, are essentially ambiguous, and must ever be re-formed in contrapuntal relation with the *canto aeterno*, the Word of God. The great significance of the Reformation therefore lies in the fact that by its gift of the Word which is both participant in history and yet transcends history the Church itself possesses the means whereby it can

transcend its own historical forms, and so make way for the continual renewal of its forms in the image of the Incarnate Lord.

This was one of the points at which the Old Testament had so much to say to the Reformers. Calvin and Knox, for example, were deeply impressed with the fact that in the history of the people of God, again and again the destruction of the Temple or some such similar diasster was only the signal for a great new development in the divine dispensation, and with the fact that under the divine providence such disasters were part of the forward moving pattern of God's purpose in history. The *Scots Confession* pointed to the marvellous preservation of the Old Testament Church in spite of every disaster, for it was constantly called into being from death to life. Even before the Incarnation the pattern of the Church's continuity in history was the pattern of death and resurrection. After the Incarnation it was by death and resurrection that the Church broke out from the constraint of a hardened historical Judaism. Theologically speaking, the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple was inevitable after the death and resurrection of Christ from the dead. It was that very pattern which the Reformers discerned again at the Reformation, when the life-force of the Christian Church which was continuous with the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead burst through the Medieval encasement, shattering its hardened forms and settled security, and renewing the forms of Church life in the West in a way more appropriate to its inherent dynamism. The arresting fact about these Reformers, Calvin particularly, is that they had an acute sense of movement in history, which was almost completely lacking in the static views of society in Medieval times. John Knox was aware of the fact that something really apostolic was happening in Europe. The Churches of the Reformation were more acted upon by a movement of God's Spirit than acting themselves. They were caught up in a charismatic dispensation in which God was pleased to renew the face of His Church.

It is worth while asking how it came about that at such a movement of God's Spirit the Old Church was unable to adapt itself to this movement forward, but deliberately set itself apart from the rest of Christendom by demanding rigid conformity

to its own absolutisations of tradition. We cannot go into this question fully here, but I have no doubt that one of the primary causes must be traced back to Augustine's *De Civitate Dei contra paganos*, in which we have "the root idea of irreversible straight-line progress in time" (Professor Harbison, *Theology To-day*, Oct. 1948, p. 393). Our quarrel cannot be with Augustine's magnificent conception of history as determined by the progressive mission of the Christian Gospel, but rather with two elements in that view which later bore such deadly fruit: Augustine's total repudiation of a cyclic movement in history, and his rejection of Biblical Apocalypse. Augustine was of course perfectly right in his criticism of the Greek notion of complete cycles in history, which in the end makes history quite meaningless. Nevertheless to deny all such cyclic movement in the Christian era means that the Church so develops in a straight line that it cannot double back to a unique point in history for correction, that is to say for reformation at its Biblical source. Thus any notion of an *ecclesia semper reformanda* is excluded. It was partly due to this that the Roman Church came to be preoccupied on the one hand with the immanent patterns of catholic structure, without referring back to the New Testament teaching about the Church and Ministry, and on the other hand with the development of dogma as shaped by the tradition and the canonical pronouncements of the Church, without the critical study of the Holy Scriptures. A straight line runs from Augustine to the decision of the Vatican Council that *ex cathedra* definitions of dogma are "in and from themselves irreformable" (*ex sese irreformabiles*).

It is the other point, however, which concerns us more here: Augustine's elimination from the eschatology of the Church of all messianic elements and his failure to appreciate the significance of Apocalypse. There can be no doubt that St. Augustine's conception of history is deeply eschatological in the Biblical sense, but his reaction to Apocalypse blinded him to the fact that again and again the meaning of history can only be fulfilled *against* itself, and against its apparent patterns and forms. Far from being a flight from history, Apocalypse is the way in which the Biblical Revelation relates the Kingdom of God to the kingdoms of this world, all of which belong to the forms and fashions which pass away. In other words, Apoca-

lypse is the way in which Revelation speaks about the clash of the divine pattern of history with the patterns of secular history, and reveals to us that again and again the real significance of history can only be realised against the stabilisation of forms which have been fashioned to suit human sin and greed and empire. Apocalypse is not a denial of form in history or of a forward-moving pattern in time, but on the contrary the assertion that the true pattern of history is obscured again and again by evil developments and patterns of evil, and the assertion that the true pattern will yet be realised within history, even if at the end of secular history. Come what may come, God's purpose in history will not be thwarted, for He will make even the wrath of man to praise Him. Even though we will not be able to say on the ground of historical inspection: "Lo here is the Kingdom" or "Lo there is the Kingdom", we are assured that God is yet making all things in history to work together for good, and at last the perfect pattern of history, the New Jerusalem, will be revealed.

The reason for Augustine's failure to appreciate Apocalypse may well be put down to the fusion of form and content which Professor Weidlé traces in the fifth century. That is to say, in Augustine's philosophy of history the Kingdom of God was being fused with the forms and fashions of this passing world. To be sure we do not find in the *De Civitate Dei* any extended correlation between sacred and secular events in history, but Augustine's tendency to transmute the Biblical eschatology into a form of Platonic idealism laid the foundation for such a correlation. And the result was the Roman Catholic Church and its secularisation of cosmic eschatology.

Nevertheless the Reformed Churches have no right to throw stones at St. Augustine. If he reacted against Montanism and Millenarianism, the Reformers reacted no less against the Anabaptists and Apocalyptists of the sixteenth century. We believe that on the whole they were right and Augustine was right; yet here too there is a failure to appreciate sufficiently the significance of Apocalypse that history must again and again be fulfilled against itself. What was the result? There is no doubt that the Reformation is synonymous with the discovery that God acts mightily in the history of a people when it takes the hardened forms of its Church life and breaks them in pieces in

order that the new people, the Church of God, may go forward, keeping step with the Holy Ghost. The great tragedy to-day, however, is that the descendants of these Reformation Churches have themselves tended to erect a rigid tradition, stabilising the forms of the Reformation period, and forgetting that the Holy Ghost moves on, and that the Church can only fulfil its mission on earth when it allows itself to be broken on the anvil of the Word and reformed again and again.

To illustrate that, let me return again to John Calvin and John Knox. It belonged to the greatness of these men that they perceived that the feudal economic and social order must pass away before the emerging capitalism of their time. Calvin never reckoned that capitalism might provide a permanent economic order, for it belonged to the evil patterns of history which must pass away. If on the one hand it was important that the Church should engage in ongoing history and inevitable that it should *use* its developing patterns, on the other hand it was equally important that the Church should see to it that these patterns were not *abused*. And so the ministers of Geneva wielded the Word of God like a hammer against all abuse, against all greed and extortion and economic oppression. Scotland was not concerned so much at that stage with the new commercialism, but it is quite clear that the struggle between the Congregation headed by John Knox and the old régime headed by Queen Mary devolved not only upon a purely religious issue but upon its corollary in the economic and social field: reform in religion entailed a reform in manners. Queen Mary saw quite clearly that the Reformation as Knox envisaged it meant a radical economic and social change, and her reaction was inveterate. It was a clear instance of the fact that the spirit of the Reformation insisted on breaking the forms by which the Church participated in the ongoing life of the world, and on pointing the people forward to fresh obedience in the concrete situations of the age.

If this spirit of reform began to die out, the spirit that proclaims the judgment of the Word of God upon all attempts to perpetuate in time the traditions of men, all attempts to stabilise the achievements of history, it is without doubt due to the failure to give eschatology its true place in Church and history. It is Apocalypse that helps the Church of Jesus Christ to keep

its head above the stream of time, Apocalypse that gives it power to transcend history, to break the fetters of a dead tradition and so to relativise the forms of a bygone age that room is created for ever new advances in the Christian mission.

One of the tragedies in the history of the Western Church is that the recoil from Apocalypse in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries has led to the secularisation of eschatology in communism in the twentieth. I believe that the Christian Church to-day faces one of these great crises in her history such as she faced in the time of the Reformation. Once again the whole economic and social basis of our life is being changed before a new way of life which is economically, sociologically, and politically very different from anything that we have known in history. We may not like the changes any more than Calvin liked the new commercialism of his age, but we must learn to adjust ourselves and the Christian mission accordingly. More than ever to-day the Christian Church stands in need of Apocalypse, in need of the conviction that the true meaning of history can be realised against itself, against its present patterns and forms, and against the new forms which appear to be settling down upon us. We must learn again to pass judgment upon ourselves, not indeed by norms discoverable within our Reformed tradition, for that would only be to perpetuate an anachronism, but by the living Word of God that transcends the forms and patterns of this passing world. God it is who has placed us in this moment of history, and claims from the Church obedience in the concrete situation in which it finds itself. Apocalypse does not tell us to retire from history or to fear its trends, but rather calls us to endure to the end inspired with the conviction that God's Kingdom will come, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven, even against all historical calculation and expectation. The Church that fails to find in God's Word the resources to transcend history can only be left behind, an empty ecclesiastical shell, but the Church that is brave enough to create new historical forms, not in the Gospel but in sociological and economic involvement with history in order not to recede from history, will discover that suddenly the Kingdom has come in power.

ON A NEGLECTED EMPHASIS IN NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY

by The Rev. Professor JAMES S. STEWART

It was Gerald Heard who said: "Newton banished God from nature, Darwin banished Him from life, and now Freud has banished Him from His last stronghold, the soul." The one thing I wish here to suggest about that dictum is this—that if for great numbers of our contemporaries the effect of Newton, Darwin and Freud has been to banish the divine, it has even more emphatically been to banish the demonic. St. Paul's "principalities and powers" and "spirit forces of evil" are now known, we are told, to have been mere apocalyptic imagination.

To this result Newton, Darwin and Freud certainly contributed. For Newton's work left no room for an irrational principle in nature; and the devil is essentially irrational, teleologically indefinable—as St. John marks by his significant use of *ἀνομία* and St. Paul by the phrase "the mystery of iniquity". "Only he who understands that sin is inexplicable knows what it is."[1] Again, Darwin's picture of the biological struggle for existence was hailed as radically superseding the Biblical picture of the cosmic struggle between the demons and the kingdom of the Lord. Finally, Freud banished the powers of darkness from their last stronghold, the soul, by successfully dissolving them into psychological complexes, neuroses, and the like; so that the good fight of faith becomes simply a matter of inner individual adjustment.

This elimination of the dimension of the demonic has had its effect upon Christian theology. Take, for example, the doctrine of man. In Romans 7 Paul interprets the human predicament with the words, "It is not I who do the deed, but sin that dwells in me"—a usurping force, personal, alive, tyrannical. On this James Denney cogently comments: "That might be antinomian, or manichean, as well as evangelical. A true saint may say it in a moment of passion, but a sinner had better not

[1] Brunner, *Man in Revolt*, p. 132.

make it a principle."[1] This warning is entirely salutary. But the fact remains that when a saint, or for that matter a common sinner, says this thing in a moment of passion, "It is not I who do the deed but sin that dwells in me"—as though some outside force getting hold of him were ultimately responsible—it is at once much more Biblical and much nearer to the mark objectively than any psychological reinterpretation which suggests that Romans 7 and the perpetual predicament there mirrored can be dealt with under some such formula as "the divided self". If temptation were essentially this kind of inner conflict—a higher self against a lower self—then presumably the temptations of Jesus in the desert and Gethsemane were also of this kind: which would make havoc of the Gospel.

I submit that in our Christian anthropology we have lost something vital here. Too much there has been lost the sense of a cosmic battle which emerges visibly on to the stage of world events—where it is not simply to be identified with what Herbert Butterfield has called "the gravitational pull of history", and where it traverses and cuts clean across all such external and contingent frontiers as democracy and Communism and invades at deeper levels the arena of the life of man and the experience of the individual soul. We have lost the emphasis that what is really at issue in the age-long tragic dilemma of Romans 7, what in fact is always at stake in every moment of temptation, is not a higher self or a lower self, personal integrity or dishonour—that is the least of it: what is at stake is the strengthening or (please God) the weakening of the spirit forces of evil that are out to destroy the kingdom of Christ. "For," says Calvin, "if the glory of God is dear to us, as it ought to be, we ought to struggle with all our might against him who aims at the extinction of that glory. If we are animated with proper zeal to maintain the kingdom of Christ, we must wage irreconcilable war with him who conspires its ruin."[2] This is the insight which modern theological reconstructions have been apt to lose. We have lost Paul fighting with wild beasts at Ephesus, and Luther flinging his ink-pot at the devil.

It is, however, in respect of the doctrine of the atonement that this loss is most serious. Those theologies which stress

[1] Romans, E.G.T., pp. 641-2. [2] *Institutes* 1.14.

mainly or solely the revelatory aspect of the death of Christ—as though all that was needed by a sinful world was for God to show how much He loved it—have failed to take seriously the New Testament's concentration upon the demonic nature of the evil from which the world has to be redeemed. They have misunderstood as secondary and extraneous elements in the primitive Christian proclamation what in fact are integral and basic components of the Gospel.

It is, indeed, true that in the New Testament the Cross is set forth as the climax of revelation. Thus the Synoptic symbolism of the rent veil can well be interpreted as meaning the destruction of secrecy and exclusion, the laying bare of the very heart of God, so that man's age-long fumbling exploration for the divine was now for ever at an end. And when as ministers of the Gospel to-day we seek to help men who are burdened with intolerable perplexities about life and providence and history and destiny, who are groping for light and finding only an impenetrable veil, we have to tell them that there is in fact no answer to their perplexities, none whatever, except in the death of our Lord on Calvary. This gives the answer, precisely because it is not words at all, but a deed, God's final self-revelatory deed, against which a man can batter all his doubts to pieces.

But the important thing is that the apostolic *kerygma* never stopped here in this doctrine of revelation. It was concerned with something more than the letting in of a light for men who sat in darkness and the opening up of a road for aliens who felt themselves excluded. After all, what can a light avail if men are blind and cannot see, or a road if they are too lame to walk? The really tragic force of the dilemma of history and of the human predicament is not answered by any theology which speaks of the Cross as a revelation of love and mercy—and goes no further. But the primitive proclamation went much further. It spoke of an objective transaction which had changed the human situation and indeed the universe, the *kosmos* itself. It spoke of the decisive irrevocable defeat of the powers of darkness. It spoke of the Cross—"placarded" the Cross, as Paul put it to the Galatians—as the place where three factors had met and interlocked: the design of man, the will of Jesus, the predestination of God. Now the point is that this three-fold

drama can be understood only when the New Testament teaching on the invisible cosmic powers—ἐξουσίαι, ἄρχοντες, στοιχεῖα and the like—is taken seriously and given due weight. Let me indicate what I mean by reference to the three factors just mentioned.

Behind the Cross there lay, first, *the design of men*, a coalition of ascertainable historical forces. It was the human attitudes of pride, self-love, traditionalism and fear which, when worked out into social, political and ecclesiastical magnitudes, resulted in the death of the Son of God. But it is quite crucial to observe that in the New Testament these visible historic forces always appear as mere agents of other invisible powers incalculably more sinister and dangerous.

It is worth while analysing this situation more closely.

Among those who numbered Jesus with the transgressors were the religious people of His day. This was one element in the coalition which erected the Cross. It is disconcerting but true that it was precisely those who were loudest in religious profession who, on encountering Jesus, were loudest in censure and protest. They saw Him healing on the Sabbath, and they said He was undermining the law of Moses. They heard Him speaking of destroying and rebuilding the Temple, and it sounded very near blasphemy. They saw the disreputable company He frequented, and they muttered "Friend of publicans and sinners". When organised religion thus branded Jesus as anarchic and subversive, the Cross was coming in sight.

A second element in the coalition was politics—Jewish and Roman. On the Jewish side, it looked at first as if Jesus might serve the nationalist purpose, and then no praise was too high for Him; but when that hope turned out to be illusory, when it appeared that He had misled the cause and betrayed the revolution, disappointed vengefulness knew no bounds. It was then indeed "expedient", as Caiaphas said, "that one man should die for the people". On the Roman side, as represented by Pilate, there could be only one reaction to the charge of anti-Caesarism. Thus politics joined hands with religion to devise the crucifixion.

The third element was the crowd. In any assessment of responsibility for the death of the Cross, the ordinary people—apathetic, easily manoeuvred, too lethargic to cast off the bonds

of fate—must bear part of the blame. Never was the hateful power of a resolute, unscrupulous minority—in this case Caiaphas, Annas and their confederates—to subvert a tolerant, unorganised majority more evident than on the night in which the crowd shouted for Barabbas and sent Jesus to His death.

It is a commonplace to say that these same forces—religious, political, social—are operating still to crucify the Son of God afresh. What is not so frequently remarked is the New Testament's insight that behind all of them stand (in Pauline language) "the rulers of this world age, the potentates of the dark present".

We have said that organised religion was at the Cross. But the New Testament sees deeper, and explains this by saying that the really sinister thing about Antichrist is not (as might be supposed) his radical difference from Christ, but precisely his diabolical resemblance to Christ: he is so like Christ that he can successfully masquerade as Christ (as the word *Ἀντίχριστος* itself suggests) and claim to stand in Christ's place, deceiving the very elect. Hence St. John's urgent warning about testing the spirits: *Ἀντίχριστος* will not deceive those who possess the true *χρίσμα*.[1]

Politics were at the Cross. But again the New Testament sees deeper, and declares that Herod and Pilate, the representatives of government, the duly constituted *ἄρχοντες* of the day, were unwitting agents of powers greater than their own, greater even than the Roman State, namely, the invisible, spiritual, demonic *ἄρχοντες τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου*: it was they, wrote Paul to the Corinthians, that "crucified the Lord of glory".[2]

And the average man was at the Cross. But once again the New Testament sees deeper. For when the cry was raised, "His blood be on us and on our children," what held these men in its baleful grip may have looked like necessity or expediency or fate: but the New Testament rejects such abstractions, and speaks rather of unseen spirits subduing men to their will. Necessity, expediency, defensible strategy, the decree of fate—we heard all these explanations in the days of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But when men and nations of decent average morality are thus driven by an almost irresistible compulsion to perpetrate such deeds and to recognise (as we all have had to

[1] 1 John 2.18, 20. [2] 2 Cor. 2.8.

recognise) their involvement in such a situation, who can doubt that something living and demonic is at work?

But now to pass on. If the first factor operating in the death of the Cross was a coalition of historic forces, the second was *the will of Jesus Himself.* He chose this open-eyed. It was His own deliberate act. The Son of Man, He said, is come to give His life a ransom for many. The Passion of our Lord was action. It was an offensive launched against the citadel of the enemy. Jesus alone was master in the hour when He endured the Cross and despised the shame. "He reigns from the tree" on which, not grudgingly and unwillingly, but vehemently and gladly, He laid down His life.

Now here again emerges the crucial issue which has too often been overlooked. It is this. The New Testament insists that this will of Jesus in His death is only to be understood in relation to the invisible powers dominating the universe and the life of man. The humiliation and sacrifice accepted in the Incarnation are not to be measured simply by the fact that there the Word was made flesh and became identified with sinful humanity (as Hebrews puts it, "He who sanctifieth and they who are sanctified must be all of one group", ἐξ ἑνὸς πάντες[1]); beyond that stands the fact that by His entrance into the world Jesus was brought into contact with, and in some measure made subject to, the invisible rulers of that world, and to one of these in particular, namely, to that one τὸ κράτος ἔχων τοῦ θανάτου.[2] Christ's coming to earth, says Dibelius,[3] was an advance into enemy occupied territory (*ein Vordringen ins feindliche Lager*). It was only by meeting these forces on their own ground, only, that is, by getting into history where they were entrenched, that He could break their power.

This is indeed essential to the understanding, not only of the Incarnation, but of the life and teaching and ministry as recorded in the Gospels. In St. Luke, the whole narrative of the activity of Jesus is enclosed, as Dibelius points out, by two onslaughts of Satan: at the outset in the desert, and at the last when "Satan entered into Judas".[4] It is clear that the Synoptic picture of the Temptation conflict, in which Jesus "bound the strong man" before "raiding his house", is intended to set the

[1] Heb. 2.11. [2] Heb. 2.14. On this, cf. J. Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, p. 57.
[3] *Die Geisterwelt im Glauben des Paulus*, p. 202. [4] op. cit., p. 203.

key for everything that follows. Hence the sign that the Kingdom has come near is precisely the casting out of demons. Hence Jesus' own interpretation of the results of the first mission preaching: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Hence Jesus' chosen self-designation "Son of Man": for as it is in the soul of man, in Adam (to use the name generically), that the cosmic principalities and powers most clearly reveal their hand and exercise their demonic sway, so it must be by a second Adam, Son of Man, that that sway is finally broken. Hence, moreover, the word of the Johannine Christ, entering upon His passion—"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world—ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου—be cast out." Hence the appalling, unthinkable wrestling in Gethsemane. Hence the saying at the arrest, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness" (ἐξουσία τοῦ σκότους). When Jesus became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, He did it in the confidence that in this final act the dark powers would overreach themselves and so be finished for ever: had they known that, Paul suggests, they would never have done it. But this was the will of Jesus in His death. In the words of P. T. Forsyth: "The holiness of Christ was the one thing damnatory to the Satanic power. And it was His death which consummated that holiness. It was His death, therefore, that was Satan's fatal doom."[1] Hence Paul was entirely right when with magnificent daring he pictured Christ as the one who wielded the hammer at Calvary: the bond was cancelled, he told the Colossians, nailed to the tree. "He disarmed the principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them at the Cross."[2] As Calvin puts it, commenting on these words from Colossians, "There is no tribunal so magnificent, no throne so stately, no show of triumph so distinguished, no chariot so elevated, as is the gibbet on which Christ has subdued death and the devil, and trodden them under His feet."

It is here that the Pauline atonement theology requires to be correlated with his basic doctrine of union with Christ. It is perhaps a defect of Bishop Aulén's *Christus Victor* that this has not been adequately done. As Jesus identified Himself utterly with man in his plight and weakness and defeat, so the Christian facing the principalities and powers now identifies himself with

[1] *The Glorious Gospel*, p. 6. [2] Col. 2.15.

Jesus in His sacrifice, His power, His victory. This is the faith that justifies. For God judges men, not by legal righteousness, but by their response to His righteousness in Christ; not, that is, by position, but by direction; not by the fact that some are ethically better equipped than others, but by the fact that some have their faces to Christ and some their backs.

Herein, too, lies the redemption of history. "The world's awful need", to quote P. T. Forsyth again, "is less than Christ's awful victory. And the devils we meet were all fore-damned in the Satan He ruined. The wickedness of the world is, after all, 'a bull in a net', a chained beast kicking himself to death."[1] In these words written fifty years ago Forsyth anticipated Cullmann, who in place of the metaphor of the bull in the net speaks of the ἄρχοντες between the Resurrection and the Parousia as tied to a rope, still free enough to evince their demonic character, but nevertheless bound, since Christ has already conquered all demons: the Cross and the Resurrection being the decisive battle that has turned the tide of the war and settled the issue, even though Victory Day may still lie in a future out of sight.[2] May we not say that the crucial illustration here is death itself, "the last enemy"? Men still have to die; yet in the death and resurrection of Jesus death—this most omnipotent of the ἄρχοντες—has been finally conquered; so that of those who are united with Christ and His victory it is true to say that they "have passed out of death into life".

Finally, there is the third factor. We have seen how the coalition of historic forces and the will of Jesus interlocked at the Cross. But the New Testament adds also this: *the predestination of God.* As Calvin puts it: "Had it not been by God's will that Christ was crucified, where were our salvation?" If the Cross, which to all the rest of the world was σκάνδαλον and μωρία, was salvation to the first Christians, this was because they had seen past the moralism of the Jew demanding a sign, and the intellectualism of the Greek seeking after wisdom, to the eternal purpose of God. If ever God had acted in history, He had acted then. In other words, the only valid doctrine of atonement is that which is linked to a full New Testament Christology. God was reconciling the world in Christ.

The significance of this for our present study lies in the fact

[1] op. cit., p. 7.

[2] *Christ and Time*, p. 198.

that it eliminates dualism. To speak, as the New Testament does, of an invisible empire of evil over against the kingdom of Christ might seem to indicate a dualistic interpretation of the universe. But at point after point the New Testament safeguards itself against that position.[1] Thus the pre-existence of Christ means that He was before the angelic rulers, before creation itself: "in Him all things were created", writes Paul to the Colossians, and specifically mentions the ἀρχαί and ἐξουσίαι which, casting off their original allegiance, revolted into demonism. Having been created "in Him" they are essentially subject powers. Dualism is further excluded by the insight of the New Testament that in history, and above all in the life and death of Jesus, the divine sovereignty is such that the hostility of the ἄρχοντες and ἐξουσίαι is compelled to subserve God's ends and not theirs. Their fierce antagonism becomes precisely the vehicle for world redemption: of this the Cross itself is the supreme illustration. Finally, in the resurrection and exaltation Christ's victory is so far-reaching and complete that He can actually use these now subject ἄρχοντες and send them out as emissaries to do His bidding: "Are they not all ministering spirits?" asks the writer to the Hebrews. It is significant that Dibelius in *Die Geisterwelt im Glauben des Paulus* interprets in this way even the ἐξουσίαι of Romans 13, seeing behind the government authorities the higher angelic powers. Whether we accept that or not, there is the great passage in Philippians 2, where Paul is possibly quoting an early Christian hymn: here the Lordship of Christ is displayed precisely by the fact that among those who bow the knee to Him are "beings celestial, terrestrial, and subterranean". This is the negation of dualism. In the end, the same invisible powers are the tribute which the Son hands over to the Father, "that God may be all in all".

I have tried to show the importance of one somewhat neglected element in the New Testament. How this element is to be interpreted theologically is a question that will certainly produce diversities of view. My one concern has been to insist that, however we may interpret it, we must recognise that here we are dealing, not with some unessential apocalyptic scaffolding, but with the very substance of the faith.

[1] Even the Jewish Rabbis did the same: the angels, they pointed out, were created on the second or later days, not on the first, and therefore had themselves no part in creation (Dibelius, op. cit., p. 189).

Let me finish on a quite practical note. Were Paul to come back to-day and look out upon the tragic conflict of our world, he would still say that "our wrestling is not against flesh and blood," not against any group of man or nations, Caesarism or Communism, as though the interests of democracy were synonymous with the righteousness of God—nothing so naïve as that. The real warfare cuts across all such alignments, and lies deeper down in the invisible realm where sinister forces stand flaming and fanatic against the rule of Christ. And the only way to meet that demonic mystic passion is with the δύναμις and passion of the Lord. Only Spirit can conquer spirit. The children of darkness are wiser in this than the children of light. The devil knows better than stifle emotion. And it is no use, in a day when spirit forces of passionate evil have been unleashed upon the earth and when fierce emotions are tearing the world apart, it is no use having a milk-and-water passionless theology: no good setting a tepid Christianity against a scorching paganism. The thrust of the demonic has to be met with the fire of the divine. As indeed it can: since Christ has overcome the world.

RICHES AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD
ST. MARK 10.17-31

by The Rev. C. E. B. CRANFIELD

In Mark 10.17-31 (= Matt. 19.16-30 = Luke 18.18-30) we have a section made up of three parts: (1) the episode of the rich man who asks Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life (Mark 10.17-22); (2) a conversation between Jesus and His disciples[1] (Mark 10.23-27); and (3) a remark by Peter (in Matt. it has a question appended) and Jesus' reply (Mark 10.28-31).[2] The whole section might be entitled: "Riches and the Kingdom of God".

Though it is true that each of the three parts could be independent, the probability would seem to be that (1) and(2) do belong together historically.[3] Mark clearly means us to understand that the conversation in part (2) followed immediately on, and was occasioned by, the episode related in part (1); and Luke has underlined the connexion by the words "seeing him" (Luke 18.24). Verses 17-22 seem incomplete without some comment by Jesus on the man's sorrowful departure, and the words of Jesus in vv. 23-27, punctuated as they are by the disciples' surprise and bewilderment and culminating in v. 27, fit the context so perfectly, that it seems more reasonable to think that we have here an historical connexion than to regard the two parts as two originally separate units that have been brought together either at an early stage in the tradition for catechetical purposes or in the making of the Gospel because Mark felt that it was unsatisfactory to end the pericope at v. 22.

The connexion between parts (2) and (3) stands differently. Though part (3) certainly fits this context well, it is nevertheless easily detachable. It is noticeable that Mark, though clearly thinking of vv. 17-31 as a unit, does not link vv. 27 and 28 together with a conjunction of any sort—an indication maybe

[1] Explicitly "his disciples" only in Mark and Matt.

[2] Matt. also includes in this part some extra material, which occurs also in Luke, but in a different context.

[3] Cf. E. Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Markus*, 1937, p. 212 f.

RICHES AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD
ST. MARK 10.17-31

THE proofs of this article (Vol. 4, No. 3, pp. 302-313) were unfortunately mislaid in transit and were not seen by the author.

CORRIGENDA

p. 304, note 1, line 2: for הַדָּא read הָבָּא.

p. 305, to the word "good" in line 5 attach the following note:

It is uncertain whether *ἀγαθός* in vv. 17 and 18 means "good" in the widest sense or in the limited sense of "kind". The Hebrew טוֹב (also the Aramaic equivalent), Greek *ἀγαθός*, German *gut* and English "good" all share this ambiguity. Strack and Billerbeck (II.24), following Dalman, maintain that here it must mean "kind" (*gütig*); but we shall be wiser to admit that it is ambiguous. As a matter of fact the two senses cannot be rigidly separated (cf. Lohmeyer, op. cit., p. 209, note 3). Lohmeyer argues (cf. on "kneeling") that "good" is in Jewish usage only applicable to God and that in v. 17 it is used "aus dem Wissen heraus . . . dass diese Frage nicht an einen anerkannten Rabbi, sondern an den einzigen göttlichen Lehrer gerichtet ist." It is true that in the OT God alone is *characteristically* called טוֹב. But the word *is* used of men too (e.g. Prov. 12.2, 14.14, Eccl. 9.2)—though it is interesting to notice how rarely. In the NT Jesus Himself speaks of *ὁ ἀγαθὸς ἄνθρωπος* (Matt. 12.35 and par.). So we need not infer either that the man regarded Jesus as more than man or that this is a detail created by Mark or tradition from a theological motive. Jesus' intention in refusing the title is much the same whether *ἀγαθός* means "good" or "kind"; for in either case it is true that, while men may be called both good and kind in a secondary sense, God is alone the source and norm both of goodness and of kindness. In the absolute sense He alone is good and He alone is kind.

p. 305, note 2, line 3: for "at" read "ad".

p. 307, last line of text: the figure 4 should be attached to the first rather than the second "him".

p. 308, note 3, line 2: for *ad. loc.* read *ad loc.*

p. 309, line 13: omit the figure 2.
line 15: for 3 read 2.
line 21: for 4 read 3.
note 4 should be transferred to p. 310 and should appear there as note 1.

p. 310. line 6: after "costly" attach figure 2.
last line of text: for 2 read 3.
notes 1 and 2 should be numbered 2 and 3 respectively.

p. 311, line 8: for "next" read "text".
note 3, line 1: for *τούς* read *τοὺς* and for *ἔστιν* read *ἐστιν*.

that he did not take over all three parts as a unit.[1] Verse 31 is a floating logion, omitted here by Luke and occurring elsewhere in the Gospels. We conclude that part (3) may have been independent originally and have been attached to parts (1) and (2) by Mark because of a similarity of theme.[2] Placed here, it serves to provide a contrast with the man who valued his wealth above eternal life; for the disciples *had* given up all for Christ's sake and the Gospel's. The warning contained in vv. 17-27 is now matched by the promise in vv. 29 f.[3]

(1) Mark 10.17-22.

Mark introduces the man simply as "one" (εἷς): it is only in v. 22 that we are told that he "had great possessions". As he is introduced in v. 17, he makes—on the present writer at least—a good impression. There is little justification in this verse for regarding his use of the word "good" as "a somewhat obsequious piece of conventional flattery, a *captatio benevolentiae*, from the unreality of which our Lord recoiled",[4] still less for detecting "irony"[5] in it. We have no grounds for saying that his approach is merely "conventional effusiveness"[6] or for finding in his words and bearing "a touch of exaggeration which betrayed the character of a sentimentalist".[7] Subconsciously we tend to blacken some characters in the Gospels, in order to

[1] Cf. ibid., p. 216, note 1.

[2] Cf. ibid., p. 215.

[3] With regard to context it is perhaps worth adding the following. Matt. and Luke follow Mark in placing this section immediately after the pericope of Jesus and the children. Mark's introduction to the section ("And as he was going forth into the way") might suggest that the blessing of the children had taken place indoors and that it was as Jesus emerged into the street that the rich man ran up to Him; but it would be unwise to press an historical connexion here. It is possible that Mark placed this section immediately after the pericope of the children, in order to provide an illustration of the solemn warning about those who do not receive the kingdom of God like children (cf. C. E. Robinson, *The Gospel according to St. Mark*, 1931, p. 138). The rich man is such an example. Wellhausen commends Shakespeare (*King Richard II*, Act V, scene 5, lines 11-17) for having noticed the contrast between the gracious invitation in the pericope of the children and the sternness of the passage that follows. (But one should note the sternness in the Markan form of the pericope of the children in v. 15!) One other point about the context may be mentioned. Luke places soon, though not immediately, after this section the story of Zacchaeus. Was that with the intention of providing an illustration of the fact that *with God* a rich man can be saved (cf. H. B. Swete, *The Gospel according to St. Mark*, 3rd ed., 1909, p. 230, as from Plummer)?

[4] A. E. J. Rawlinson, *The Gospel according to St. Mark*, 1925, p. 138.

[5] I. Abrahams *apud* Rawlinson.

[6] A. W. F. Blunt, *The Gospel according to St. Mark*, 1929, p. 217.

[7] C. E. Robinson, op. cit., p. 138.

keep them a safe distance from ourselves and avoid the unpleasantness of having to recognise in ourselves any likeness to them. We must beware of this tendency here. It is noteworthy that Jesus Himself has a sympathetic understanding of the immensity of this man's difficulties (vv. 23 f.). The fact that he asks the question he does[1] shows that he is to some extent at any rate concerned with what really matters, with the ultimate question. Even though we learn afterwards that he is not concerned *enough* with it, he is nevertheless not (like the rich fool of Luke 12.16 ff.) so taken up with this age as to have forgotten altogether the age to come. Moreover, he recognises in Jesus One who might be expected to know the answer to the all-important question and his use of the epithet "good" is surely sincere so far as it goes—a significant tribute to the impression made by Jesus. His running shows his eagerness and that he is sufficiently in earnest to be careless of his personal dignity.[2] His kneeling indicates either his reverence for Jesus or his sense of urgency or both.[3] Unlike Nicodemus,[4] he comes quite openly —in a public place and in broad daylight. That presumably

[1] For the Rabbinic expressions for "eternal life" (i.e. life in the age to come), חַיֵּי עוֹלָם (eternal life), חַיֵּי עוֹלָם הַבָּא (life of the age to come), see Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum NT aus Talmud und Midrasch*, I.808 f. In Mark the phrase only occurs here. For "inherit" in Mark and Luke see A., Richardson, *A Theological Word Book to the Bible*, pp. 112 ff.; Lohmeyer, op. cit. p. 208. In later Jewish thought the age to come or the life of the age to come has replaced the land of Canaan as the inheritance of the saints. To inherit eternal life, the age to come, or the life of the age to come, are frequently recurring phrases in later Jewish writings. For reff. see Kittel's *T.W.z.N.T.*, III.780. For *ζωὴ αἰώνιος* in the LXX see Dan. 12.2; cf. 2 Macc. 7.9.

[2] Aristotle, at any rate, considered the slow step a mark of his *μεγαλόψυχος* (*Eth. Nicom.*, 1125a)!

[3] G. F. Maclear, *The Gospel according to St. Mark* (C.B.S.), 1893, p. 112, says happily: "Knelt before Him, as was usual before a venerated Rabbi." At the other extreme Lohmeyer maintains that it was not Jewish custom to kneel to a Rabbi, that it was not only the mark of urgent supplication, but was something that a Jew only accorded to God. So here he says that the kneeling originates in the knowledge that his question is being addressed to the unique divine Teacher. See Lohmeyer, op. cit., pp. 46, 104 f., 207 f. (on Mark 1.40, 5.22, and this verse respectively). But see also H. Schlier in *T.W.z.N.T.*, I, pp. 783 ff. While it is true that among the Hebrews kneeling is characteristically the mark of man's humility before God (both OT and NT), yet it is also used in OT of homage to a king, so too in NT of gentile homage to a king, and it is used in supplication to a man of God in 2 Kings 1.13. Among gentiles it was of course much more frequent—e.g. by slaves to masters, and by suppliants. So we may conclude that the rich man intended only respect or specially earnest entreaty, though Mark and his readers would no doubt see a special appropriateness—kneeling before the Messianic King and divine Lord.

[4] Cf. G. A. Chadwick, *The Gospel according to St. Mark* (Expositor's Bible), p. 274.

implies at least some courage, while the fact that he comes at all implies—in spite of his words in v. 20—some sense of inadequacy, a discontentedness with himself.

The first part of Jesus' answer calls in question the man's use of the epithet "good"—"Why callest thou me good? none is good save one, even God." This is difficult and has puzzled readers from the author of the First Gospel onwards. He altered both the man's question and Jesus' answer—presumably because Jesus' words as given by Mark seemed liable to be interpreted as a disclaimer both of absolute goodness and of oneness with God. How then are we to explain this difficult verse? Not as implying that Jesus was conscious of sin,[1] nor as implying that He is not God. Nor yet, on the other hand, was the primary intention of these words to assert His divinity, as some have argued—though of course it is true that Mark and his first readers knew that as a matter of fact Jesus is both good and God, and Mark no doubt means us to hear these words against the background of that knowledge. When Bengel comments, "Jesus does not accept the title of goodness from him without the title of divinity", he hints at what is in the background here and at something which is also profoundly true in the more general sense that ultimately, if Jesus is not God, it is impossible to maintain that He is good; but this comment does not provide the right clue to the understanding of this verse. For that we may turn to some other words of Bengel on this same passage: "Jesus did not rest in Himself, but referred Himself wholly to His Father. He lived in the world as a pilgrim and stranger, and it was in that condition in which the Psalms describe Him as *poor and needy* that He wrestled towards that eternal good and joy, about which this youth was inquiring."[2] The inquirer's idea of goodness is of the self-centred righteousness of the Pharisee, of a goodness that is

[1] For Jesus' sinlessness *vide* Jn. 8.46, 2 Cor. 5.21, 1 Pet. 2.22, etc.

[2] "Atque ipse non in se requiescebat, sed se penitus ad Patrem referebat. Viatorem ac peregrinum agebat in mundo, et in eo statu, in quo Psalmi eum ut *miserum et inopem* describunt, contendebat at aeternum illud bonum et gaudium, de quo hic juvenis quaerebat" (*Gnomon Novi Testamenti*). J. Schniewind rightly connects Jesus' answer with the Messianic secret, which, understood as governing Jesus' words and works and not as something read back into the material by Mark, is the clue to the exposition of the Gospel (*Das Evangelium nach Markus*, 5th imp., 1949, p. 137: this is quite the best commentary on St. Mark known to the present writer). Reference should also be made to the interesting article on ἀγαθός in *T.W.z.N.T.*, Vol. I, pp. 10 ff., by W. Grundmann.

man's achievement; Jesus, on the other hand, confesses (here surely the Fourth Gospel rightly interprets His mind), "The Son can do nothing of himself".[1] So Jesus is here concerned to direct the man's attention away from Himself to His Father, who is the only source and only norm of goodness. This inquirer needs to be shown that to raise the question of goodness is to raise the question of God, and so to be directed away from the idea of goodness as a human achievement to the recognition that true goodness has its only source and standard in God. The answer to his question about eternal life is not to be found in any self-centred moral striving or self-centred religiousness, but in God Himself, whom to know is eternal life.

The purport of the second part of our Lord's answer is similar. Once more He directs the questioner's attention to *God*, this time by referring him to the Ten Commandments.[2] This man is not content with the Commandments. Perhaps the reason for this is that he thinks that they are not plain enough. But intellectual difficulties about ethics are not infrequently simply an excuse for not obeying or for delaying obedience.[3] We tend to turn the Commandment into an academic problem, when we want to escape from it. Or perhaps the reason is that he thinks he has already advanced beyond this elementary level (cf. v. 20?) and so wants to be told what is the stage beyond and above the keeping of the Commandments. Or perhaps it is that they seem so ordinary and he wants something more exciting—a special and private recipe for goodness. So Naaman was unwilling to do the simple thing Elisha bade him but would readily have attempted "some great thing",[4] because that would have gratified his self-esteem. Perhaps there is something of each of these in this young man's discontent with the Commandments. At any rate Jesus refers him back to them. They are adequate. They are the answer to his question and they are simple and plain enough. That

[1] John 5.19; cf. 5.30, 8.28, etc. Cf. G. A. Chadwick, op. cit., p. 276.

[2] Only Commandments of the Second Table are mentioned. Cf. Matt. 7.12, Gal. 5.14, Rom. 13.8 ff. This does not deny the prior importance of the First Table. The Second Table, however, provides the outward and visible test of obedience to the First (cf. Calvin, *Institutio*, 2.8.52, 53).

[3] Cf. A. Schlatter, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, reprinted 1947, p. 296; D. Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, 1948, p. 64 f., in the course of a discussion of the Matt. parallel. On the other hand, Lohmeyer defends the legitimacy of the rich man's question (op. cit., pp. 208, 210).

[4] 2 Kings 5.

does not mean that they are easy to obey; but the difficulty lies not in understanding them, but in doing them. The Commandments are the answer to the question about eternal life, not because a man can keep them and so earn eternal life, but because, if he honestly tries to keep them, he will be brought to recognise his bankruptcy. Bengel aptly comments on the Matthew parallel: "Jesus refers the complacent to the law."

The man's naïve reply makes it only too clear that he has not understood the Commandments nor ever really taken them seriously. "Whoever says, 'All these have I kept', thereby convicts himself of understanding neither them nor himself."[1] Job too, before his conversion in chapter 42, is so sure of his own righteousness that he actually challenges the Almighty to let him have His indictment of him, so that he may wear it as a crown.[2] The heresy that maintains that some Christians do in this life attain to sinlessness survives where men judge themselves by a standard of their own invention or else in some way tamper with God's standard. If we will only permit the eighth Commandment to refer to silver spoons, then of course many of us can put a jaunty tick against it—"This have I observed from my youth!" But allow it to question us further (e.g. whether we have stolen another's good name by gossip) and about our inner motives and to suggest to us positive duties, and the case is altogether different. To take the Commandments seriously means recognising that the standard is absolute. God Himself is the norm of goodness. But here it should be pointed out with emphasis that this inquirer was no more mistaken about the Law's real seriousness than were his Jewish contemporaries. Paul once too thought that he had kept the Law—"as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless".[3] Strack and Billerbeck say: "That man possesses the ability to fulfil the Commandments of God perfectly was so firmly believed by the Rabbis, that they spoke in all seriousness of people who had kept the whole Law from A to Z"; and they give two full closely-printed pages of illustrations.

"And Jesus looking upon him loved him."[4] That look of

[1] A. Maclaren, *Expositions of Holy Scripture, Matthew xviii-xxviii*, 2nd ed., p. 51. Cf. Calvin, *Institutio*, 4.13.13, on this and on the whole pericope.
[2] Job 31.35-37. Cf. *Expository Times*, August 1943, p. 297.
[3] Phil. 3.6.
[4] Cf. vv. 23 and 27, and 3.5, 34, 5.32, 8.33, 11.11, Luke 22.61, John 1.42.

love was not a look of approval. We are not to assume that Jesus loved him for his goodness or sincerity or keenness or idealism, or because He saw in him great potentialities. Nor are we to regard His love as mere human attraction. Nor are we to look for a suggestion of irony—as though Jesus sarcastically congratulated the man on his splendid achievement of keeping all the Commandments, knowing all the time that he was self-deceived. Rather must we understand the Lord's love here as the divine love for sinners, the *agapé* that is not caused by any worth in its object but is ever seeking to redeem the unworthy.[1]

But God's love is not sentimental or indulgent. Jesus' love for this man does not lead Him to spare his feelings.[2] Because He loves him, He calls him—the ground of election is God's love. The call is at the same time both gracious and stern. The man must be made to recognise his need and he must be thrust into a position in which decision is inescapable. So in the words of Jesus in v. 21 many things are mingled together—the sharp probe that will show the man his self-deception, the summons to repentance, the gracious offer of Himself as the way, the command to be obeyed, the promise of that eternal life about which he had inquired. "One thing thou lackest: go, sell whatsoever[3] thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me." Condemnation, challenge, testing, appeal, promise, command and invitation—all are here. If he obeys, he will enter into freedom and joy in the discipleship of Jesus, while the pangs he will feel in giving up his possessions will show him what has been his idol. But his face darkens[4] at the saying and he goes away.

[1] *Pace* Lohmeyer, op. cit., p. 211, note 2. Robinson, op. cit., p. 139, suggests that ἠγάπησεν "may mean 'kissed' —a sign of affectionate approval sometimes bestowed by Rabbis on their pupils". Lohmeyer reluctantly resists the temptation to render "kissed", as there is no evidence for this meaning at this time; but renders "herzte" and explains that it means "eine liebkosende Gebärde". Bengel treated ἐμβλέψας . . . ἠγάπησεν as an example of hendiadys and rendered "amanter aspexit". Both Matt. and Luke omit ἐμβλέψας . . . ἠγάπησεν.

[2] It is suggestive to compare Jesus' handling of this man with God's wrestling with Jacob (Gen. 32.22 ff.) seen in the light of C. Wesley's hymn, "Come, O Thou Traveller unknown" or Calvin's Commentary on Hosea, 12.3 f.

[3] Luke emphasises the completeness of the surrender by inserting the word πάντα, as J. M. Creed notes *ad. loc.*

[4] στυγνάσας: Lohmeyer (p. 212, note 5) compares Isaiah 57.17, Dan. 2.12 in LXX, and also Ezek. 27.35, 28.19 (in Cod. Alex.), 32.10, Wisdom 17.5, and Matt. 16.3.

The cost is too great. He loves mammon more than eternal life—more than God. So his sin is exposed. He is breaking the first and greatest Commandment—"Thou shalt have none other gods before Me."[1]

At this point we must go back and look a little more carefully at v. 21. There are several things to notice there. (*a*) The counsel to sell all is given to a particular person. We are not to conclude that the same is given to all. To recognise this is by no means to draw its sting, but rather to begin to see its full seriousness; for material wealth is not the only possible idol. Any person or thing is an idol for us, when we allow it to share that love which we owe to God. And behind all these idols is the one great idol—a man's own self.[2] We shall need to keep this in mind, when we come on to vv. 23-27. (*b*) At the same time we certainly must not gloss over Jesus' attitude to riches.[3] (*c*) It is important to see that it is the first Commandment that is at stake. The words "and give to the poor" indicate the way to dispose of possessions which have become an idol, but they are not to be made pivotal. That is what the apocryphal Gospel according to the Hebrews does to them, thereby, it would seem, dissolving Jesus' sentence into mere moralism.[4] A rich man might give to the poor on a very large scale, so that the words "and absolutely nothing goes out from it (i.e. from thy house) to them" would be quite untrue of him, and yet still be making his possessions into an idol. (*d*) Neither selling one's possessions

[1] So Luther comments on "One thing thou lackest": "Eines: Das ist, es fehlet dir ganz und gar; denn du willst fromm sein und doch dein Gut nicht lassen um meinetwillen, noch mit mir leiden. Darum ist Mammon gewisslich dein Gott, und hast ihn lieber denn mich" (*apud* Schniewind *ad loc.*). This is surely to be preferred to Lohmeyer's interpretation, according to which Jesus is now asking the man to take a last step that leads *beyond* the Commandments ("über dieses Gesetz hinaus . . . ein Anderes und Höheres . . . "—p. 211). So too in the Matt. parallel εἰ θέλεις τέλειος εἶναι does not imply that this selling all is a supererogatory extra. (Lohmeyer seems inclined to agree as far as the Matt. parallel is concerned, but to think that this has changed the significance of the Markan story—p. 218.)

[2] Cf. Mark 4.19, Luke 12.13-21, 16.19-31, etc.

[3] Quoted in Huck's *Synopsis*, 9th ed. (Engl.), p. 145, and also in M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 1924, p. 6. I think that a careful consideration of this fragment will confirm my suspicion, though I am not quite sure. It is true that in Mark, when Jesus refers the man to the Law, it is only the Second Table which He quotes (see footnote 2, p. 306 above); but my impression is that there is a movement on from the Second Table to the First (to the First Commandment), and this the Gospel according to the Hebrews has missed.

[4] For Jewish ideas about laying up treasure in heaven by good works and particularly alms-giving cf. Lohmeyer, p. 212, and Strack-Billerbeck, I.429 ff. Jesus uses the Jewish figure, without intending its "work-righteousness".

nor giving the proceeds to the poor, which that makes possible, is conceived as a meritorious act that will *earn* treasure in heaven.[1] What is made clear is that discipleship involves an exclusive allegiance, trusting oneself to Jesus alone, not partly to Him and partly to something or someone else. In other words, it is costly. The would-be disciple is bidden to burn his boats behind him and commit himself without reserve to his Master. The offer of the Gospel and the demand it makes cannot be separated from one another; but that is *not* the same as saying that obedience to the demand is the means of earning the offer! We are saved by grace alone, not by grace and works! (*e*) The words "Follow me" are gift and command together. Here is the good news hidden in the apparently stern words to the inquirer. Jesus offers Himself to him; He is Himself the answer to the man's question, the way to eternal life, for He is "the resurrection and the life"—the goal as well as the way to it. To inherit eternal life one must lay hold on it where it is offered as a gift in Jesus Christ. The call to follow includes within it pardon for all past refusings—yes, and for those refusings which will ever be mingled with our obedience so long as we are in this world—and the gift of all that Christ is; but it is also the command to follow Him wherever He may lead, in obedience and trust.

This man loves his possessions too dearly. So he goes away in silence. But the barb has stuck and he goes, not unconcerned and complacent, but with a deep sense of frustration and disappointment—"sorrowful". His sorrow is a sign of hope; for it is a sign that Jesus, who "loved him", has not let go His hold on him. Whether this sorrow actually was transformed into repentance that leads to life or whether it darkened and deepened into the sorrow of death we are not told.

2. Mark 10.23-27.

Jesus watches the rich man depart and then, turning to His disciples, exclaims: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" It is not surprising that the disciples are amazed[2]; for Jesus' attitude to the rich is startlingly

[1] Cf. D. Bonhoeffer, op. cit., *passim*, for a suggestive treatment of what he calls "costly grace", and in the Gospels such references as Mark 8.34, Matt. 8.18-22.

[2] The Codex Bezae and some Old Latin MSS. invert the order of verses 24 and 25—presumably with the intention of improving the sense. It is unlikely that they preserve the true order.

fresh. He neither covets their wealth nor hates them.[1] Instead He *pities* them.[2] The rich man is neither to be envied nor hated, but needs our sympathy, because of his specially great temptations and the frightening handicap in relation to the kingdom of God under which he labours. So easy is it for him to feel a false security and rely on his possessions and become so taken up with them that he forgets what is infinitely more important.

If we are right in following the next of B, ℵ, W and the Sahidic Version,[3] Jesus next couches His sentence in general terms. It is desperately hard to enter the kingdom of God for everyone—for the poor as well as for the rich. Then once more He returns to the special case of the rich. It is more difficult for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God than for a camel to pass through a needle's eye.[4] In other words, it is a sheer impossibility. The disciples, as might be expected, are now more amazed and bewildered than ever. If this is the position, "then who can be saved?"[5]—can anyone at all?

Verse 27 provides the all-important clue to the meaning of vv. 17-27: "With men it is impossible, but not with God: for all things are possible with God."[6] To inherit eternal life, to enter the kingdom of God, to be saved—all these are equivalents —is outside the sphere of human possibilities altogether—for the poor as well as for the rich (v. 24). Only by a miracle can any man be saved. But God *is* a God of miracles!

3. Mark 10.28-31

Whether or not the material of these verses originally belonged to this context, it certainly fits in here remarkably well.

[1] In the OT there are two main attitudes toward riches—one regarding them as the sign of God's favour, a reward for goodness, the other (later) identifying the poor with the pious, the rich with the ungodly.

[2] A. Maclaren, op. cit., p. 55.

[3] The addition of *τοὺς πεποιθότας ἐπὶ (τοῖς) χρήμασιν* after *ἔστιν* by A, C, D, Θ, the Lake and Ferrar groups, the Byzantine text generally, the Old Latin and Vulgate Latin, the Sinaitic and Peshitta Syriac, and the Bohairic Egyptian looks very much like an attempt to make the saying less drastic.

[4] What we have here is a humorous instance of the impossible. Cf. Strack and Billerbeck, II.828, and also Matt. 23.24. We need not take seriously the Procrustean efforts of some interpreters either to reduce the camel to a rope (reading *κάμιλον* for *κάμηλον*—a conjecture going back as far as Theophylact) or to enlarge the needle's eye into a postern gate!

[5] There is a variation in the MSS. between *πρὸς αὐτόν* and *πρὸς ἑαυτούς* in v. 26. Westcott and Hort favour the former, Nestle and Huck the latter.

[6] Schniewind (op. cit., p. 138) calls it "ein Schlüsselwort für sämtliche sittlichen Weisungen Jesu".

Peter now, as on other occasions,[1] acts as the spokesman of the Twelve and blurts out what it is unlikely that he was alone in thinking. In contrast with the rich man, who has gone away, the Twelve have left all to follow Jesus.[2] Matthew adds—no doubt giving the correct sense—"What then shall *we* have?"

Jesus does not at once rebuke the spirit of this utterance. Instead He makes a quite general threefold promise. Everyone who forsakes house or kinsfolk or lands for Christ's sake (*a*) shall in this age receive back a hundredfold in the fellowship of Christ's disciples what he has given up,[3] though (*b*) at the same time he will have to endure persecution; (*c*) in the age to come he will inherit eternal life. To this is added in v. 31 a logion that occurs in other contexts also, but is slightly modified in form here and in the Matthew parallel[4]: "But many that are first shall be last; and the last first." It is one of those memorable sayings of Jesus that are let loose upon us in the Gospels without a certain context and are resistant to all attempts to chain them down once and for all to one particular reference. That it is eschatological is clear and that it refers to the many surprises which the final judgment will bring and the fact that the values of this present age will be reversed.[5] But within this general framework there are various possible references that immediately suggest themselves. Obvious possibilities are to refer the pair "first" and "last" to the rich and powerful[6] on the one hand and the poor and unimportant in this world on the other; to the nation of Israel and the Gentiles[7]; to the people with a reputation for piety (the Pharisees in particular) and the publicans and sinners[8]; to the more and the less prominent among the disciples; but here in this context it is perhaps most natural to understand the saying as a warning to Peter and the rest of the Twelve called forth by Peter's outburst in v. 28. The apostles must not become self-complacent because, unlike the rich man, they have left all to follow Jesus. Such self-complacence would be highly dangerous. Moreover, one who

[1] Cf. 8.29 and 32, 9.5, 11.21, 13.3.
[2] ἰδοὺ ἡμεῖς emphasises the contrast.
[3] Cf. Acts 2.44 f., 4.32 ff., 1 Tim. 5.2, Rom. 16.13, Gal. 4.19.
[4] The addition of πολλοί softens the statement.
[5] Cf. Luke 6.20-26.
[6] So in 6.21 οἱ πρῶτοι τῆς Γαλιλαίας means "the chief men of Galilee".
[7] This is suggested by the context in which Luke places this saying (Luke 13.22-30).
[8] Cf. Matt. 21.28-32.

is at present a refuser[1] may in the future by God's mercy accept the call and even in the age to come be preferred to them, while their having left all is not in itself a guarantee that they will remain faithful.[2]

So the last verse warns us against overlooking the relevance of the section to ourselves. We are to recognise in the rich man's departure our own so frequent refusings and our failure to love God with our whole heart and soul and mind and strength and our neighbour as ourselves; and, putting our trust in that love which embraced the rich man and which embraces us and in God with whom all things are possible, to hear with penitent but comforted hearts the renewed summons to accept the gift of eternal life in Jesus and to seek to obey more truly the commandment of the Gospel.

[1] The present writer is inclined to think that the use of Dante's phrase, "the great refusal", in connexion with Mark 10.17-22 (e.g. Maclear, op. cit., p. 113; Chadwick, op. cit., p. 281; Rawlinson, op. cit., p. 137; A. M. Hunter, *The Gospel according to Saint Mark*, 1948, p. 103) may tend to obscure the relevance of the passage to us by removing the rich man into a class by himself as *the great* refuser. Incidentally it may be noted that "him who through cowardice made the great refusal" ("colui Che fece per viltà lo gran rifiuto") in *Inferno* III.59-60 has for centuries been generally identified with Celestine V, the aged hermit who abdicated within a few months of becoming Pope. Other suggestions are Esau and Pilate. But the words "vidi e conobbi" in line 59 would seem to indicate a contemporary of Dante's.

[2] Judas was one of the Twelve, Paul was not! And Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea came out into the open in the end.

BOOK REVIEWS

The English Reformation to 1558. By T. M. Parker. Home University Library, Oxford University Press. viii+200 pp. 5s.

There is certainly no dearth of books on the English Reformation, and a very great deal of research on it has been carried out in the last thirty or forty years; and yet, despite many positive achievements, particularly in the understanding of characters, the period is still very susceptible of different interpretations. Nearly every history of the English Reformation could be attacked from another point of view with a good deal of justice. The very canons of interpretation are themselves in doubt. Is the Reformation in England to be regarded secularly—i.e. as a political, economic or social movement—with religious motives either in a minor rôle or else merely a tool in the hands of the politicians; or does it occupy a position in England similar to that of the Continental Reformation —that is to say, does it represent a breaking-through of a religious force which itself moulds social conditions and, to a large extent, politics? These are extremes of interpretation between which there are many degrees.

This new book by Mr T. M. Parker definitely belongs to the former sort. Thus he says: "Though the effects of the religious turmoil raging on the Continent reached England almost from the moment of Luther's revolt, and impinged there upon a situation in which the traditional Catholicism of the country was already shaken by Lollardy and anti-clerical feeling, yet the events which followed were less the result of a national movement than the outcome of a powerful monarchy's natural desire to dominate an hitherto independent Church, and of a series of events which gave it the chance of so doing" (p. 117). We must call this book, not a history of the English Reformation, but a history of England during the period of the Reformation with special reference to the religious policy of the rulers. As such it is a very fair, quite accurate (except on some theological points) account and a useful introduction to the subject. We acknowledge that Mr Parker's interpretation has this to be said for it—that politics played a far larger part in shaping the course of the Reformation in England than, say, in Switzerland. But to give an over-preponderance to this aspect at the expense of the religious is a misinterpretation.

We have already questioned Mr Parker's accuracy on matters theological. In the only passage in the book that deals with doc-

trine at any length, he shows himself dominated by the Anglo-Catholic notion that Reformation religion is based entirely upon a certain psychological movement of the subject, and is, in consequence, "subjective" as opposed to healthy Catholic "objectivity": "The central dogma of the Protestant theology was the doctrine of justification by faith only. This stated that the individual soul's relation to God, its translation from the state of being subject to the wrath of its Creator as a member of a fallen race . . . was brought about as a result of a psychological act by which a man accepted Christ consciously as his personal Saviour" (p. 118). It would appear that Mr Parker is more indebted to the decision cards favoured by revivalists than to the writings of Luther, Calvin, Cranmer and Ridley for this curious reconstruction of "their" theology. When he goes on to say that "upon such a view the Church and its ministrations played a relatively minor part in religion" (p. 119) we are forced to conclude that he was wise in keeping clear of doctrinal discussions in the most of the book. One further curious judgment must be observed. To say, without any qualification, explanation or support, that "Now [i.e. in 1548] Cranmer adopted the more radical notion that the elements were no more than symbols" (p. 131) is, to say the least, a little incautious. We know that Mr Parker has an eminent *patristic* scholar behind him, but we doubt whether any reputable student of *Reformation* theology would state the matter in quite such a bald and definite manner.

T. H. L. Parker

God's Grace and Man's Hope. By Daniel Day Williams. Harper Brothers. 15s.

Some three years ago about thirty members of the Staff of the Student Christian Movement met privately in London with Reinhold Niebuhr to hear him talk (as only he can talk) on the relationship of theology to current political and international issues. Many of them had come to the conviction that Niebuhr's theology underestimated the possibilities of the victory of the Christian cause within this world, and they were eager to put their criticism to him. As a matter of fact they were so fascinated by his theological acumen and grasp of current affairs that they never succeeded in pressing their point.

This criticism is being made by a number of people to-day, few of whom would call themselves liberals, and it has been pointed out with force that the great missionary hymns and the missionary enterprises of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were nourished on a faith more hopeful of immediate victories than is the dialectical theology of to-day. If with Brunner we reject the belief

that Christian action in the world is a triumphal progress, is the only alternative his picture of continual sorties from a beleaguered fortress? (*Der Mittler*, p. 562).

Dr Williams's book is the first attempt to give systematic expression to this point of view. I shall put his main thesis in his own words. "Liberalism has no place for redemption, because it does not see the need of it. Neo-orthodoxy recognises the need for redemption, but it has never made an adequate place for the real possibility of redemption as transformation of our human existence; hence it postpones redemption to another realm. These sentiments may be too sweeping, but I believe they are essentially just" (p. 32). The reader of this review may think that we have here a thoughtless and sweeping criticism of liberalism on the one side, and of the neo-orthodox on the other—whose chief names the author gives as Brunner, Barth and Niebuhr. But it is not so. Dr Williams admits that there are many differences among the neo-orthodox, but feels justified in treating them as one school, and makes good his claim. On the other hand he treats the liberals with great sympathy, and by his quotations shows that he has not—as is too often done to-day—put up a liberal theologian of straw only to knock him down.

In the event he says comparatively little of Barth, of whom a footnote wisely says: "Judgment as to whether Barth's theology adequately interprets the moral demand in the Christian life must await the publication of his Church Dogmatics."

Barth's place in the triad is in fact taken by Nygren, and it is the criticism of his work, *Agapé and Eros*, which is perhaps the best and most trenchant thing in the book. The relevance of the discussion of the question of *agapé* and *eros* to Dr Williams's central theme is that if there be so deep a gulf between the two as Nygren says, then *agapé* and the new life can no more take root in the kingdoms of this world than a lettuce could in the midst of the Sahara. Several points are made: first, the difficulty of Nygren in finding a place for man's love to God, since *agapé* is so often described by him as a love for what is worthless. Second, when man loves his neighbour with *agapé*, as a result of divine grace, he becomes for Nygren a mere tube through which that love flows, while Christian love is surely in fact the freest and most personal of all relations. And thirdly, Nygren's assumption that love is either wholly egocentric or else completely spontaneous, unmotivated and selfless and that nothing but harm can come of attempting to bridge the gap in thought or fact, assumes that my neighbour and I are completely isolated. But love is possible precisely because man is social, and the Kingdom of God is surely a realm where the good of one is the good of all.

It is interesting that Karl Barth has dissociated himself from the stark dualism of *eros* and *agapé*, and asserts (*Dogmatik* III, 2, 337) that a third possibility exists, the love consisting in human kindness, which lies between them. Were this not a natural possibility of man, then his nature would be so different from Christ's human nature that Christ could not be man's Saviour. This shows that Barth may later develop an ethic which allows more for the possibilities of grace in this world than in the other neo-orthodox theologians, since in Barth's view *agapé* restores diseased human-kindness and *eros* to their healthy functions.

There follow discussions of Niebuhr and Brunner. In brief, the criticism of Niebuhr is that he tends too much to regard power as an evil in itself. True, he denies this explicitly, but the general tendency of his thought is to assert that not merely the misuse of power is evil, and its possession a temptation, but that the thing in itself is evil. The whole aim of Niebuhr is to assert the duty of the Christian to take part in the realm of political and economic struggle, but his tendency is to be too pessimistic about the possibilities of grace there. He is further neither wholly clear nor consistent about the possibility of sacrificial love for man, about its relation to mutuality or reciprocal goodwill, nor yet is he convincing when he states that sacrificial love, in the Cross of Christ, stands on the margin of history merely to judge it, for Christ's cross has in fact had the most tremendous effects on the course of history.

Brunner, Williams continues, expresses in the "Divine Imperative" a similar view about the evil of power, and the lovelessness of all law, especially the law of the State. Yet to this law the Christian must submit, and in its making and administration he must take part. Perhaps Williams does not do justice to the other side of the paradox which Brunner also maintains, that it is for love's sake that we must support the State, thus expressing in it indirectly, though not directly, the law "love thy neighbour as thyself".

But there is real substance in Williams's criticism of Brunner on the score that he regards the legalistic element in life wholly as a result of sin. And he goes on to claim that persons could never grow to maturity in a world of purely personal relations, for only a world which consists largely of subpersonal processes and abstract structures offers the enduring structure in which personality can exist. Thus, just as power is not essentially, but only accidentally sinful, so the impersonal orders of our life are not essentially, but only accidentally evil. And because they have not seen this clearly, both Brunner and Niebuhr have formed too pessimistic a view of the possibilities of grace in this world.

Dr Williams makes the claim that it is because of their false

teachings about the Fall that both Niebuhr and Brunner have taken so pessimistic a view of the possibilities of the growth of the Kingdom within this world of space and time. Different though these interpretations of the Fall may be, they have this in common: that they regard the world as we know it as essentially fallen, and do not place the state of integrity within the space-time series at some moment in the past (p. 104). Sin for them is not a series of misdeeds from which we can be extricated through moral education and effort; it is a status which characterises our human existence. It would be interesting to know what is Williams' own doctrine here, on which he bases his more optimistic view. But we must also question the responsibility of Niebuhr's and Brunner's doctrines of original sin for their pessimism. For Augustine and Luther and Calvin all believed in a historical Fall, yet they also were pessimistic about the future of this world. Luther's saying will be remembered: "This world is an evil fellow; may God soon make an end of him!"

In a chapter on "Time, Progress and the Kingdom of God", Dr Williams points out the need for a definite hope as a stimulus to moral action. We cannot to-day base our hope on the liberal motion of progress, nor on the neo-orthodox denial of it. And if with Tillich we say that technical and political progress are possible, but not political and moral progress, we shall be denying a truth for which liberal theology was groping. The judgment that there can be no progressive development of morality among men is not defensible. "Unless there be some cumulative and progressive development of the community of freedom, equality and love among men, it is impossible to give any adequate account of our common experience of sharing in the spirit and insight which come to us from others." I confess that if the progress here spoken of be a raising of the moral level of society through the years, the logic of this sentence wholly escapes me. A page later on (p. 119) Dr Williams moves over to firmer ground, and expresses the Biblical faith that God overrules evil for good.

There follows a criticism of the neo-orthodox conceptions of time, which, being based on Kierkegaard, though with different variations in the different writers, make so sharp a distinction between God's time and the time of natural processes that God's action can only be expressed in history in terms of sheer paradox and discontinuity. Unhappy consequences flow from these ideas of Kierkegaard, which the neo-orthodox writers have modified, but not been able to avoid altogether—an extreme individualism, the divorce of faith from practical and social effort, and the denial of moral progress in history. Such a dualism between God's time and

man's cannot be accepted by the new school whose lines of thought Williams is laying down.

What is to be our concept here in guiding the believer to his duty in the world? Dr Williams rightly turns to the concept of the Kingship of Christ, which began with His glorification and will last until He shall have put all things under His feet. It is true that the writer says that "creative and redemptive power has been released in our human existence which was not wholly released before"; but it seems a few lines lower down as if the Kingship were being rationalised away into the assertion that God in Christ has disclosed that the ultimate meaning of our existence is love—a true and mighty revelation, but surely less than the Kingship of Christ. Here one is reminded of Cullmann's interpretation, which surely is not wholly satisfactory either. For him Christ's Kingship means that He rules over all visible and invisible powers in the universe, and will allow them only so much scope as He chooses. But in the event this Kingship seems to mean little more than that the Divine Power of overruling all things for good is at work, and this, like Williams's interpretation of the Kingship, is surely inadequate to describe a personal Lordship which is actually new in history. A more decisive and scriptural interpretation of the Kingship is still to be given.

The concluding chapters of the book which treat of Christian ethics are rather disappointing in that they seem to give us very little that goes in any way beyond Emil Brunner's treatment of the theme in his Christian Ethic. But after all it is rather difficult to state in a hard and fast manner the difference between the ethical conclusions of the two schools of thought, Brunner's and Williams's. What we can perhaps say is that if Dr Williams's criticisms of neo-orthodoxy are correct, then we are entitled to rather more short-term optimism about the prospects of Christian action in this world than neo-orthodoxy allows for. There are greater possibilities present in the world to the transforming power of love than Niebuhr and Brunner had supposed. Both Brunner and Calvin would certainly allow that there is a real place in their theology for growth in grace, though it is never a growth which places a man beyond the power of temptation, or renders out of date the justification by faith alone.

Dr Williams speaks a good deal of the necessity of philosophical presuppositions in theological thought. It is surely good to examine one's theology and the theology of others to see if presuppositions drawn from some favourite philosophy are distorting one's doctrine, and forcing on it, perhaps, an unbiblical optimism or pessimism. Williams claims that Kierkegaard's philosophy has made neo-orthodoxy more pessimistic than the Bible, and the philosophy of evolu-

tionary optimism has made liberalism too confident. Whether in both cases he is right or not, his criticism is in principle legitimate.

But the reviewer has the suspicion that the philosophy of process has had an unhealthy influence on Dr Williams's own theology, depersonalising it from time to time. For example, it may be that this influence is at work where the Kingdom of God is defined without any reference to God its King as a "universal community, in which each member is more free, more mature, more powerful through what he gives to and receives from every other member", where the Kingship of Christ is inadequately described as I have noted, and in another passage where the notion of vocation (p. 148) is defined in a curiously abstract fashion which seems to deny that there can be a special personal call of God to an individual man to do a special piece of work with his life.

It need not be surprising that the philosophy of process should have this effect if it is made, alongside of the Biblical Revelation, a pillar of our theology. For it does not spring out of a specifically Christian view of God and the world. Further, it seems that the credit is sometimes given to the philosophy of process for a truth which could be more securely and safely held on the basis of Biblical revelation. For example, it was not necessary to wait for Whitehead and his associates before the "living, saving God of the Bible" could be made intelligible! It seems then, that the thought of Dr Williams is at its best when it is in fact most Biblical—whether he thinks that it is drawn from the Bible or the philosophy of process; and that when he goes wrong it is when he actually bases himself on his philosophy. It is in its critical passages that this fine book is most satisfactory and stimulating. Dr Williams has opened up country which both he and others must explore more widely, and all who look for a theology which does justice to the reign and Kingship of Christ in this earth, ought to read it.

DAVID CAIRNS

The Protestant Dilemma. By CARL HENRY. Wm. B. Erdmann's Publishing Company. 248 pp. $3.

As a result of two world wars, "the sun has set upon the distinctive premises of modern thought". The revolt from the empiricism of an earlier day is signalised by the deeper concern for metaphysics as exemplified by Weiman's Naturalistic Theism, Whitehead's Realism, Husserl's and Heidegger's existentialism, the theological variations of it current on the Continent, Neo-Thomism, both humanistic and Christian, personalistic Idealism and the new Evangelical Apologetic. The superficial slogans of an optimistic age—the inevitability

of progress, the natural perfectibility of man, and the all-sufficiency of scientific method have been ruthlessly judged by the tragedy of contemporary man and to-day thinking people are dominated by a sense of inevitable and impending disaster, by the ineradicable evil of man, and by the urgent need for a super-scientific method. But this in itself is not necessarily a hopeful situation, for many of the philosophical hideouts in which the present generation takes refuge provide no real deliverance from the dilemma of civilisation which is also the dilemma of Protestant Christianity. The only solution for our modern problem is a return to Biblical Theism and on such a return depends the whole future, not indeed of the Church, for God has His own mysterious ways of preserving its continuity, but of Christianity in its Protestant expression. But precisely what is this Biblical Theism to which we must return? This is the urgent question and upon the answer given the adequacy of the contemporary solution depends.

The author writes as a convinced Fundamentalist of the somewhat rigid variety characteristic of America, and his volume sounds the familiar notes of the Fundamentalist attack upon the less-than-Christian theologies of a former generation. There is the same healthy insistence that theology must be Biblically centred, the same strong, though less defensible conviction that the only tolerable theory of Biblical inspiration is that of verbal infallibility, and the same characteristic antipathy to that evolutionary theory of human origins and history which played such a large part in the theological liberalism of an earlier day. But there are also new and refreshing notes. The author is not content to fight with weapons forged half-a-century ago, and there is a healthy contemporaneousness about his review of theological issues. Unlike many Fundamentalists he is aware that the battle has passed into new phases and he is not satisfied to shadow box on deserted fields. But while the war has been carried to new fronts, it is still—in the opinion of the author—a war against Liberalism in a new form, although the leaders of the new movement are themselves unaware how close are their affiliations with the essential principles of the Liberalism they denounce.

The book is in part an obituary, written in a spirit of mingled gratitude and relief of the older Liberalism, and in part a vigorous criticism from the Fundamentalist point of view of the "Neo-Supernaturalist" movement. Dr Henry acknowledges the debt we all owe to Barth, Brunner, Niebuhr and others for having in alliance with the hard facts of history, broken the reign of a too easy and too optimistic Liberalism, and for having opened up new possibilities for theological reflection. His quarrel with them is that they have not sufficiently broken with Liberalism and their recall to Biblical

religion is not a recall to the Bible or the Biblical message as these have been understood in traditional Christianity. In their polemic against the Liberal misunderstanding of the Gospel he would go all the way with them, but he finds himself compelled to part company and even to join issue with them when they turn to a restatement of the essential content of the Christian faith.

The three major chapters of the book deal with Revelation, Sin and Christology, but the heart of the book lies in the chapter on Revelation. For it is precisely here, that the crux of Dr Henry's difference with neo-orthodoxy lies. Whether one begins with the Fall or the Chalcedonian formula, one finds that the underlying question is the same, and that question really resolves itself into two; first as to the nature of revelation, and second as to the relation between revelation and record, or the problem of Biblical authority. In Dr Henry's view, revelation is unduly limited by his opponents to personal encounter and revelational event, and no adequate recognition is given to revelation as the communication of truth in propositional form. To limit revelation in this fashion is to by-pass the Bible and open the door to an unbiblical and unregulated mysticism. It also leaves room for a radical Biblical criticism which is destructive of a truly Biblical theology. The newer theologies of the Word having broken decisively with the presuppositions of an evolutionary philosophy of religion accept without question and even defend a Biblical criticism which is based on the postulates of such a philosophy. What they are trying to do is to combine the realistic insights of the theology of the Bible with a Biblical criticism based on a denial of these very insights, and the inevitable result is paradox, obscurity and irrationalism. A still more serious consequence is that theology is still too easily dominated by philosophic assumptions which are discontinuous with the Hebrew Christian tradition, and that personal religion tends to lose itself in a woolly world of opaque emotion. What we are offered is indeed a theology of the Word but it is a Word divorced from the Bible, issuing ultimately in a non-Biblical and non-theological mysticism, a mere reconstruction of the Liberalism it claims to have displaced.

It is questionable whether Dr Henry, in spite of his generous appreciations, has done full justice to the central emphases of the movement he criticises, or whether he realises how valuable is Dr Brunner's insistence that personal encounter is only significant within a doctrinal context and that context one which is Biblically controlled, if this last phrase be interpreted in the light of a conservative Biblical criticism. This book, however, is a refreshing change from the too-frequent Fundamentalist programme of conducted tours through carefully selected fields of pseudo-scientific

apologetic with the object of establishing the authority of the Bible or effecting the miracle of regeneration.

It remains to be said that the covers of the book are horrible, the paragraphing at times a source of irritation, and the polysyllabic jargon to which the author descends on occasions forbidding and ungraceful. One shudders to see Niebuhr's formulation of original sin defined as "the unnecessitated inevitability of translating altruistic ideals into an egoistic-tainted reduction". At such moments one turns with relief to the footnote quotations, of which there is an embarrassing abundance, with the feeling that they provide more illumination than the text.

GEORGE R. BOLSTER

Lactantius' Epitome of the Divine Institutes. Edited and Translated with a Commentary by E. H. Blakeney. S.P.C.K., 1950. xiv+175 pp. 11s.

MR BLAKENEY believes that "the *Epitome* of Lactantius might usefully serve as a text-book in theological colleges, and in the upper forms of public schools, and might also be read by Ordination candidates". To make it available for these purposes he has prepared an attractive edition of the text with Introduction, Translation and Commentary. The text, in the main that of Brandt (Vienna Corpus), is beautifully printed; and the translation which follows reads easily and is generally reliable, though the scholar will still have to turn to the original to find the exact sense in passages of philosophical and theological import. It would be a demand for the impossible to expect a translator to produce a technically perfect rendering of a work of this kind. Mr Blakeney confesses to difficulty with the words *Justitia* and *Mundus*, and to their elucidation along with *Pietas* and *Religio* he devotes an extended Detached Note (p. 169). He might have added *Natura* and *Naturalis*. The Commentary is evidently intended for the classes enumerated above, and is adequate if somewhat elementary, but references are given to patristic and modern works for further study of important topics.

The choice of Lactantius seems to have been dictated in part at least by the fact that his Latinity is easy and good. Was he not called "the Christian Cicero"? But there are other valid reasons. An African fully educated in the literary tradition of the age, appointed by Diocletian professor of Latin Oratory in Nicomedia which the emperor did so much to equip for its new status as Imperial City, selected by Constantine to be tutor to his son Crispus, Lactantius was a man of consideration and a representative of the highest culture of the time. Withal a convert to Christianity, a

sufferer and apologist for his faith, he may be coupled with Eusebius of Caesarea as representative of the cultured Christianity of the Constantinian epoch; a period of hopes which the fourth century was to belie, and of a faith which was to be clarified by long-continued controversy. The *Epitome*, his own summary of his most important work, the *Institutiones Divinae*, is an excellent introduction to his thought, and many will be grateful to Mr Blakeney for making it so pleasantly accessible.

JOHN H. S. BURLEIGH

Saint Augustine and the Donatist Controversy. By GEOFFREY GRIMSHAW WILLIS. S.P.C.K. 15s.

PRACTICALLY all schools of Christian thought in the West are of the house and lineage of Augustine, but few boast themselves heirs of the entire inheritance. There is no agreement as to what Augustinianism is or as to whether his thought can be gathered into a consistent whole. Most of his work was done in controversy on many fronts. In fighting the Manichees he laid his flank open to Pelagius, and in pursuing the Pelagians he endangered his ecclesiastical position. But he was in all engaged in defence of Christianity, normally identified with the Catholic Church. The identification is most complete in the works against Manichees and Pagans, but it was the Donatist challenge that led him to develop his characteristic ecclesiological theory, which gives it its only interest to-day.

Of the Donatist Controversy Mr Willis here gives us a definitive study. He first traces the history of the schism from its beginning in 311 to the time when Augustine entered the lists. Chapter III is a detailed account of Augustine's part in the controversy to the Colloquy of Carthage, 411, and beyond, with a survey of his entire literary contribution—sermons, epistles, treatises—in chronological order, a most useful guide to the student. Chapters IV-VI systematise Augustine's teaching under three heads, Doctrine of the Church, Church and State, Ministration of the Sacraments; while the Conclusion is a final summing up and evaluation. Throughout, the book is exhaustive, scholarly and penetrating.

In itself the Donatist schism is unedifying, and the Donatists themselves unattractive. To be sure we know but little of the rank and file. Most, doubtless, would be simple-minded devotees. Of the fanatical and violent *Circumcelliones* we hear more than enough, but not enough to prove that they were "nationalists" or "social revolutionaries". At any rate they were not typical, and were rather an embarrassment to their own party. Some of the leaders of the schism were masterful or even violent men, but most were humble

and pious, admittedly no match for the rhetorician and dialectician who was also a travelled man, having been to Rome and Milan! Mr Willis is doubtless right when he stresses Augustine's patience and pastoral zeal to win them back to the fold. But the bishop was clearly irritated by people who would not listen to or be convinced by his "reasonable and charitable" arguments; and he had no doubt that it was wickedness in them not to be impressed by the grandeur of the Catholic Church, and lightly to excommunicate all "transmarine" Churches, both East and West, as if Africa were the world! It seems that Augustine came reluctantly to believe in coercion, but his conversion was complete, and he gave the Catholic Church its final theology of persecution. But he also worked out a subtle and influential theory of the relations of Church and State in the light of the complex relations of love and justice in man's inevitably sinful estate, the theory which reappears in the *De Civitate Dei*. All this is briefly but luminously expounded by Mr Willis (pp. 135 ff.).

Equally important is the Augustinian doctrine of Church and Sacraments. While constantly praising Cyprian for his charity and love of Unity, Augustine abandons his rigidly logical doctrine of the institutional Church as the repository of all grace, to which the Donatists with much justice claimed to adhere. The Church at the Synod of Arles had pronounced against Cyprian's doctrine of the utter nullity of baptism "outside the Church". Augustine carries this further, drawing a distinction between the validity and the efficacity of Sacraments. Donatist Sacraments were perfectly valid but remained inefficacious unless and until the recipient made his submission to the Catholic Church. Mr Willis sees danger in this "middle course between a complete insecurity about sacramental grace and the rigidity of the pure Cyprianic doctrine", but defends it as "a valiant and not entirely unsuccessful attempt" to introduce a broader charity, and to pave the way to "reunion". He does not mention the still more charitable and surely the truer view expressed by the Faith and Order Conference, Edinburgh, 1937, that sacraments may be efficacious which to some may seem technically invalid. Mr Willis connects this distinction with that between the Visible and the Invisible Church, which he accepts rightly as virtually Augustinian, but he plainly misunderstands Augustine when he supposes that we have here a Platonic distinction between the phenomenal and the real Church. If that were so he would be right in saying that "with the introduction of the thought of predestination, the valuable distinction between a Visible and an Invisible Church becomes blurred". Augustine's distinction is not, as in Plotinus, between "Here" and "There", but between "Now"

and an eschatological "Then", wholly dependent on the Will of God. The thought of predestination no doubt raises an unresolved problem in ecclesiology, but it at least safeguards the Supremacy of God *over* the Church, a vital truth often obscured by "Catholics" but the foundation stone of Reformed doctrine.

JOHN H. S. BURLEIGH

Philo's Bible. The aberrant text of Bible quotations in some Philonic writings and its place in the textual history of the Greek Bible. By PETER KATZ. University Press, Cambridge, 1950. xii + 162 pp. 25s. The Kaye Prize Essay for 1947.

THE quotations which Philo makes from the Old Testament are as a rule from the LXX. In some of Philo's works however it has been observed that the quotations from the OT differ from the LXX version. The problem of explaining how the aberrant text of these quotations arose—though they be but a minority of the many quotations which Philo makes—is the subject of this very careful study. Dr Katz, in a painstaking analysis, sets out a list of passages which display an aberrant biblical quotation and compares these with the Hebrew text and with the LXX. This detailed examination, which has more points of interest than concerns the textual question immediately involved, accounts for the greater part of the book. And the conclusion to which the author comes is that the quotations in the aberrant group of treatises reflect a recension of the Pentateuch, a recension that has now become lost but which was used by an Interpolator who, often unable to appreciate Philo's thought, adapted Philo's quotations and made out of Philo's works what "might be compared with a hack's edition of a classic". The Interpolator used Aquila also and tended to move away from the LXX. That he employed a recension of the Pentateuch that is now lost is of course the centre of Dr Katz's theory but for the assumption of such a text he finds an analogy in the recension R (of unknown origin) which Rahlfs detected as lying behind the Greek text of the book of Ruth.

In giving an account, under the title of *The History of the Problem*, of the labours of earlier workers in this specialised field of research, the writer reveals what seems to have been the particular contribution which laid the foundation of his own findings. Cohn, the joint editor with Wendland of the edition of Philo's works, had stated in reaction to some criticisms (see Katz, p. 133): "According to my knowledge of the Philonic evidence, modifications have certainly been made in those Bible passages which head a longer argument, or even in longer quotations which he presents in the middle

of a discussion, but never in his own words where he paraphrases the text of the Bible or alludes to a biblical word". This difference in the strata of any Philonic treatise certainly called for explanation. The observation that in the writings in question the quotations at the beginning of the treatise, namely the major *lemmata*, were most affected by aberrant readings was the first stage in the evidence which led to Dr Katz's further conclusions. These conclusions bring him into conflict with the views of Kahle (Schweich Lectures, 1941, pp. 140-6) who supports, or has reconditioned, a thesis by A. Schroeder (*de Philonis Alexandrini Vetere Testamento*, 1907) which maintained that the text of the aberrant group "is not only the most ancient but the one used by Philo himself". Dr Katz sets forth his own thesis very convincingly and has otherwise provided us with a book that will further prove to be fruitful in Philonic studies.

O. S. Rankin

Introduction to the Old Testament. By Aage Bentzen. Gad's Forlag, Copenhagen; Oxford University Press, Geoffrey Cumberlege. Vol. I, 268 pp., 1948; Vol. II, 300 pp., 1949. 30s.

This Introduction to the Old Testament by Professor Aage Bentzen is a revised and largely rewritten edition of the Danish original, which appeared in 1941. The Danish edition was, of course, not available in this country until after the war, by which time new tendencies were making themselves felt, and the whole "orthodox" critical position was being challenged, especially by the vigorous group of scholars in Uppsala. A comparison of the Danish and English editions is very illuminating, since it brings out the sharp differences of view which have emerged in what has come to be a vigorous three-cornered contest between the Scandinavian centres of Oslo, Uppsala, and Copenhagen.

Vol. I deals with the Canon and Text of the Old Testament, and the Forms of Old Testament Literature. For this edition Professor Bentzen has had access to Kahle's work *The Cairo Geniza* (1947), but he was too early for the Dead Sea Scrolls. The section on the Forms of the Literature takes up more than 160 pages, and here the average English reader will find himself in what is largely a new but very fascinating field. The study of literary forms is associated particularly with the name of Gunkel, whose work was never popularised over here as Wellhausen's was. Form-criticism is closely bound up with the question of oral tradition and its relation to the written literature, another major problem in current criticism. Bentzen regards oral tradition not simply as the pre-literary stage in the growth of the literature, but as something which continued side by side with its written forms.

Vol. II deals with Introduction as it is generally understood in English works, and includes introductions not only to the Canonical books, but also to the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. Here, too, the reader who has neglected to keep up his Old Testament studies during the past ten or twenty years will find himself in a different dimension from that in which he lived when he was in college. We have now to reckon with three stages in Old Testament criticism, the documentary (Wellhausen), the form-literary (Gunkel), and the traditio-historical ("The Uppsala School"), in that time order. The difficulty in which many British readers now find themselves is that they are likely to be pitchforked straight from stage one into discussions at the level of stage three, for the reason, already indicated, that they are insufficiently familiar with stage two.

Bentzen is prepared to go a long way with the Uppsala scholars. He quotes with approval from his Copenhagen colleague Johannes Pedersen—whose work has contributed much to the Uppsala *bouleversement*—that "all the sources of the Pentateuch are equally pre-exilic and post-exilic", i.e. the so-called "documents", JE, D, and P, are parallel strata rather than exactly definable entities which can be dated at successive points on a single date-line. This, of course, is a generalisation which will need to be more carefully defined in subsequent discussions. All the appearances are that the foundations of the Wellhausen position were well and truly laid, though this is not to say that the details of the superstructure will remain unchanged. Bentzen recognises this, and he is in some ways in the unenviable position of attempting to mediate between two antagonistic views and of getting no thanks from either side. His book is inevitably to some extent polemical, though this does not seriously detract from its objectivity and fair-mindedness. His purpose is eirenic. His knowledge of the subject is encyclopaedic, and he has given us what is the most up-to-date and comprehensive Introduction to the Old Testament now available in English. The price may seem stiff, but the busy minister who has no time to master the Scandinavian languages—the basic critical position of Uppsala is so far only accessible in Engnell's *Gamla Testamentet I*—may by-pass them with a good conscience if he reads these volumes.

C. R. North

Lives of the Prophets. By Stephen L. Caiger. S.P.C.K. 10s. 6d.

The sub-title, "A thousand years of Hebrew prophecy reviewed in its historical context", reveals best the scope and merit of this book. Beginning with the times of Samuel Mr Caiger gives a narrative of the events from the founding of the monarchy in Israel through

the Exiles and Return to the Maccabaean Revolt, thus covering a thousand years of prophecy from Samuel (1080 B.C.) to Second Zechariah (135 B.C.). The strong point of this book is the historical background which Mr Caiger portrays vividly with great economy of words. Drawing on a wide knowledge of the evidence provided by archaeology and of the annals, inscriptions and religions of the ancient empires and civilisations whose rise and fall mark the stages of Israel's pilgrimage, Mr Caiger lights up the pages of the Bible by descriptions of their policies and enterprises, their customs and ways of living, their trends of thought and even their fashions and follies which in various ways proved a trial and temptation to Israel. He enables us thus to visualise in a concrete way the actual temptations that faced the people and the world in which they lived and worked. This is done extremely well and in brief compass, and quotations from Psalms, Prophets and historical books set in the text bring out more clearly the close link between familiar words and not so familiar historical settings and situations. One may note for example the brief and vivid evocation of the sights that would meet the eyes of Jewish exiles on their entry into Babylon and the overwhelming effect on their morale (p. 240). This is only one of many passages that help us to realise the prestige and appeal of the great powers in those days and the peculiar temptations they brought to Israel.

Mr Caiger's definition of a prophet is wide enough to include most of the outstanding names in Israel's history. "Abraham was a prophet, plucking his people from the polytheism of Chaldaea to give them the religious freedom of Canaan" (Introd., p. x). Indeed it is the lives and the viewpoint of the Prophets that give continuity to Israel's history. Mr Caiger uses the resources of historical and literary criticism and research to trace the influence of prophets on one another and their times and it is the development of their message that gives the inward continuity underlying the outward continuity of events. There is truth in this but it seems to the reviewer that the distinctive ideas of election, the kingdom, the word and the covenant point to a factor in Israel's history which disrupts the natural continuity, even of the transmission and development of ideas, as the ultimate ground of unity and meaning.

It is natural that the intention of seeing the Biblical History in its contemporary setting should lead to the precise dating of passages and Mr Caiger shows great skill and ingenuity in pin-pointing historical situations to match various scripture contexts. With some of these identifications one might quarrel, e.g. that the small stone in Daniel 2.34 means Judas Maccabaeus, but they are all illuminating and in many cases will compel the reader to think again. At the

same time one must be on one's guard against supposing that even the correct historical situation absorbs all that is in a prophetic word or situation. Even if Jonah gets into the whale's belly of history it takes more than human aid to get him out, and as commentators often remark it is a pity that the whale gets so much attention. The self-imposed limitation of seeing the Biblical events in their historical setting seemed to the reviewer to prevent Mr Caiger from doing justice to eschatology and apocalyptic. The concepts of metaphor and allegory and "wondrous dreams" (p. 271) projected into the future do not exhaust the meaning of apocalyptic. There is at the root of it more than an inadequacy of language, but rather the perception of an imminent fulfilment of history that transcends known historical realities. Of course apocalyptic deteriorates. There is apocalyptic for apocalyptic's sake unlit by the revealing Word. But it is in its way and in its time not less adequate than any other form to be a channel for the truth. In this context it may be remarked that the prophets are too narrowly conceived as reformers partly owing to the necessity inherent in the mode of presentation which makes the eschatological note in their message sound like rather distant thunder.

But these are minor criticisms to a book the main and avowed object of which is to see the prophets against their historical background. This is a task which the writer carries out with an infectious enthusiasm and with a remarkable power to evoke scenes of the past in a dramatic and moving way. The result is a very readable, instructive and thought-provoking book. Although one may disagree with some of the hypotheses and judgments—e.g. that Hosea, as compared with the Deuteronomist, had a "dim view of the lovingkindess of God" (p. 168)—one will learn much. This book will be a great boon to all engaged in teaching the Old Testament in schools as well as to ministers desiring to get a better grasp of the prophetic message. It has the advantage of giving a clear and continuous narrative right up to Maccabaean times. There is an excellent index and chronological tables inserted at the end of each section help to give a clear survey of world events in the different periods.

J. C. Campbell

The Baptism and Temptation of Christ. By Frank Buchanan. James Clarke & Co. 6s.

The sub-title, *Myth and Fact in Holy Scripture*, gives a clue to the author's outlook and method. Starting from the questionable statement that "the Jews had no use for history; . . . the facts of their

experience were interpreted and recorded in terms of the myth and the ritual which sprang from it", he describes his book as "an attempt to illustrate this theme by showing how in the Bible water is used in a mythological way to represent both death and life". This he does with an ingenuity that would do credit to Philo of Alexandria. Finally at His Baptism Jesus "takes upon himself the character of this Ark, and of the crossing (of Jordan). Mythologically interpreted, the Ark and the crossing contained the hope of Israel, but historically . . . this hope was unfulfilled. But in our Lord this frustration is gathered up into the hope, and the fact gathered up into the myth; for He is the way of salvation for Israel, and for the world." The treatment of the Temptation follows more or less conventional lines, but for one reader at least it is spoiled by its fanciful and tiresome allegorism. And is a sentence like this profound or merely obscure?—"True to His nature, His baptism, and His fasting in the wilderness, our Lord refuses to assert the myth over against the fact, but gathers the fact up into the myth. He is the Word made flesh, the myth made fact; not the Word in spite of flesh, or the myth in spite of fact." But the book is thoughtful and original, and those to whom this kind of exposition appeals will no doubt find it profitable.

G. H. C. Macgregor

The Baptism of Art. By Wladimir Weidlé. Dacre Press, Westminster. 8+35 pp.

This small essay by a historian of art deserves close attention of theologians as well. The author's main thesis is very simple, but ingenious. The "early Christian art" was, in fact, no "art" at all. There was no artistic purpose or interest. This "art" was deliberately serving "an alien end". It was rather a "mortification" of art (p. 32). This art was neither descriptive, nor even "symbolical". Weidlé calls it accordingly "signitive" (p. 10). A "sign" as such, i.e. as distinguished from a "symbol", does not "express" or depict anything—it only indicates, points out to something else. Its own form or character is quite irrelevant and indifferent: "something there must be, but there is as little as possible" (p. 9). The early Christian paintings—Weidlé is dealing primarily with the wall-paintings of catacombs—do not tell a story, they do not claim even to "represent" persons. They simply refer believers to the reality of Salvation, into which they had been initiated through the rites of Baptism and Eucharist. As Weidlé puts it, "it is a code of visible forms intended to serve as signs, and this signitive character it draws from its mystery import" (p. 32). Or again, "it is a language

coined to convey thought within a religion; this thought it does not embody, as the language of poetry does, it simply clothes it, like the words of our everyday speech" (p. 11). "It was indeed a descriptive art, but its descriptions might perfectly well be replaced by some verbal or other code of signs" (p. 10). It is precisely at this point that a major doubt inevitably arises. Was there really but an indifferent and conventional "code"? As a matter of fact, all "signs" or images used in the art of catacombs were *scriptural* with a possible exception of the *Orante*. Could really this "code" of "*Biblical* signs" be easily replaced by some other? Moreover, were these signs merely "indicative"? It is perfectly true that a new convert had to believe first of all "the reality of his initiation" (p. 15). And Weidlé rightly stresses the unity of the sacramental rite of initiation: Baptism and Eucharist belong together; this is true of the fourth century as well, as can be seen from the *Catecheses* of St. Cyril of Jerusalem and other sources too. But this "reality" itself was grounded precisely in certain *historical events*, of which the rite of initiation was a "remembrance", or rather an enactment. And "initiation" itself was a personal meeting of the neophyte with his Living Lord and Redeemer, i.e. with "historical Jesus", the Crucified and Risen. The belief in an absolute *finality* of baptism (p. 30) was but a corollary of the basic belief in the absolute finality of Christ's victory ("the only perfect and sufficient sacrifice" of the Cross). It is hard to believe that, as Weidlé contends, "the Good Shepherd was not an image of Christ at all, even in one special aspect", but just "a sign"—"not so much even of Christ, as, let us say, of some thought about Christ" (p. 11). After all, the Good Shepherd is a persistent Biblical symbol. In his subtle analysis Weidlé seems to have overlooked completely that "Biblical climate" in which the Early Church was living and growing. People for whom the paintings in catacombs were intended, and those who had these pictures executed, knew their Bible pretty well. There were from the beginning *two* terms of reference in every Christian intercourse: the Bible and the Sacrament. Technically speaking, "signs" used in the early Christian art were primitive and undeveloped; they did not intend anything "spectacular". But by no means were they simply a "code". It was a living and spontaneous language, and a scriptural language throughout. Of course, it was not merely "a sort of popular Bible anthology" (p. 16). There was an underlying principle of selection, and this "principle" was sacramental—in this Weidlé is perfectly correct. But he forgets the Biblical background. He ignores the whole conception of Biblical "types", which was so typical exactly of the epoch with which he is dealing—the third century; cf. Origen—and this conception is

relevant to the study of art no less than to the study of the Bible. A "type" is not merely a "sign", and the Sacrifice of Isaac would be "indicative" of the Cross of Christ not only in a "signitive" manner. "Signs" and "realities" were correlated in the context of the Biblical *Heilsgeschichte*. History of Christian art can be adequately understood only against the background of Biblical exegesis.

GEORGES FLOROVSKY

Asking them Questions (Third Series). Edited by Ronald Selby Wright. Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. xviii + 194 pp. 7s. 6d.

LIKE its predecessors, this book, at "the third time of asking", presents a series of problems, 29 in number, to which answers are offered by the most varied and gifted team yet assembled by its resourceful editor. A study of the list of questions and their sequence vouches for the competence with which he has used his resources. The result is an attractively presented volume, more profound than its precursors, dealing with more that is of urgency in our time and doing so at a deeper level of thought. The "answers" of its distinguished contributors may not convince everybody—indeed, their writers would not always find themselves in agreement with one another's postulates—yet all are one in the Faith, and every paper is worthy of its place. In the reviewer's opinion, there are very many sincere but critical "would-be" Christians who will find themselves especially helped by the replies to "What is the 'Atonement' about?" and "Isn't Christianity played out?"

W. M. WIGHTMAN

The Book of Common Prayer and the Worship of the Non-Anglican Churches. By W. D. MAXWELL. Oxford University Press. 2s. 6d.

DR MAXWELL stood in a brief but notable succession when he was nominated by the Friends of Dr Williams's Library to deliver the 1950 Lecture under the trust. The Dr Williams's Library is a well-known nonconformist foundation in Gordon Square, London, and houses 75,000 volumes, many of them of unusual interest. To be nominated lecturer by this body may well be considered an honour not only accorded to the nominee, but done his Church.

The little brochure contains accounts of the Service Books of the Reformed, the Anglican and the Westminster traditions. The story of the second of these has been often, copiously and competently told, and little space is devoted to it here. The importance of the Oxford Movement liturgically is well known, and the writer

attributes to it the fact that the responsive character, given to the Services of the Book of Common Prayer as from 1549 they were worked out, became more than a duologue between parson and clerk, and was at last by the middle of the nineteenth century fully realised by restoration to the congregation of their rightful part. The Westminster Directory is full of interest and, for those not so familiar with it as perhaps they should be, of surprises. But its extensive and intensive prolixity fully merits the comments that the lecturer passes on it. The Service Books of the Reformed Churches receive treatment at greater length. The story impinges on Scotland at the point where Knox's Liturgy was adopted as the Service Book of the Church. Three quarters of a century of use in over sixty editions was checked by the sudden revolt against that particular liturgy for ever associated with the names of Laud and Jenny Geddes and against its royal imposition upon the Church. But the period is long enough to demonstrate that, whatever reluctance there may be to-day to the use of liturgy, it is not rooted among the foundation stones of the reformed Scottish Church.

Liturgical movements in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in England form a thrilling and many-coloured pattern. Initial prohibition of the use of Prayer Books, whether in public or private (penalties rising from £5 for a first offence to a year's imprisonment for a third), in the end succumbed to the Act of Uniformity. Presbyterians and Independents alike moved over into dissent, but the former contrived to retain several characteristic distinctive and traditional features of their own, such as adherence to ordination with ministerial laying on of hands and the restriction of sacramental celebration to the clergy. But from the eighteenth century onwards, the Prayer Book, whose use they had denied themselves earlier, began to influence powerfully the development of worship. Within the Anglican Church itself, several attempts at revision were made, but for the most part these would have deprived the book of its admirable clarity and concision, and rather mercifully they all proved abortive. The Dissenters too engaged in many attempts at direct revision of the Prayer Book. But more interesting and lasting was the third stream in the liturgical experiment, which consisted of fresh compilations. Here the influence of the Prayer Book is traceable, in the earlier period more in matters of order than of language; but latterly (as in the case of the compilations of Martineau, Hunter and Orchard) both verbal and structural affinities are strongly marked, and particularly in the Communion Office.

In Scotland after the Revolution Settlement, the general trend was to settle down at a level of hitherto untraditional bareness, at which even the reading of Scripture was discouraged, and even more

frequently the reciting of the Lord's Prayer. In the nineteenth century, the mind of the Church was occupied by the highly controversial matters of constitutional importance, culminating in the Disruption and the astonishing release of spiritual vitality that resulted. But as soon as more settled conditions prevailed, the interest of the Church again reverted to liturgical matters. One of the merits of the Lecture is that it traces compendiously the movement that reached its latest manifestation in the Book of Common Order of 1940. Dr Maxwell's judgment is that the "'Form and Order for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion' represents a long tradition brought to its perfection, Scottish and Reformed yet essentially Catholic. In its dignity of action, felicity of expression, and adequacy of content, it provides a vehicle of worship entitling it to a place among the great rites of Christendom, and it is rapidly being recognised as such."

In this development, the influence of the Book of Common Prayer is demonstrable. For the most part, this influence has been admitted judiciously. At one main point, however, in Dr Maxwell's judgment, it has worked deleteriously. The order of service generally practised in the Church of Scotland, and even in other continental reformed Churches, has been modelled more closely on Morning Prayer, whereas the norm of worship in the earlier service books of the Reformed Churches was the eucharist.

This little publication, it may be hoped and expected, will further extend the reputation which Dr Maxwell has already made for himself as a liturgical scholar. He has no patience with "meaningless liturgical millinery" of any kind; nor, with all his regard for Anglican forms in their appropriate place, has he any desire to see them imposing themselves uncritically where other equally honourable and proper traditions operate. What is approved here is the just enrichment of worship by genuinely catholic and reformed influence.

J. K. S. Reid

The Book of Common Prayer. Its Making and Revisions. By Edward C. Ratcliff. S.P.C.K. 10s.

This sumptuous volume has been produced for the quincentenary last year of the first Prayer-book of Edward the Sixth, but its value will be permanent. Professor Ratcliff, now Ely Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, is one of our most distinguished liturgiologists and in this labour of love he has received brilliant assistance from the Art Editor of the S.P.C.K. and from the Sun Printers Ltd., of whose work he justly says that it "is at once more exact and not less pleasing

than that of an earlier Sun printer, Edward Whitchurch, by whom the earliest extant copies of the First Prayer Book were issued in 1549". There is a succinct and thoroughly competent account of pre-Reformation Service-books and of all the Reformed Anglican books up to and including that of 1661. The book is enriched by no fewer than eighty superb illustrations of pages from the various books, as interesting to the student of typography as to the student of liturgics. They include eight illustrations of the tragic Book of 1637, best known, with whatever degree of inaccuracy, as "Laud's Liturgy". This volume is really indispensable for the student of the Anglican rite. It is a triumph of beautiful book production and in these days an uncommon bargain at its price of 10s. It is difficult to quarrel with the closing words of the learned editor's Introduction: "If the English Liturgy is not incomparable, its language is so. It is a supreme testimony to the abiding worth of the Prayer Book, as a Book of worship and devotion, that its prayers, and even its services, are to-day used by many of those whose forefathers preferred to endure persecution rather than to accept the Prayer Book, and who themselves remain outside the communion of the English Church."

J. Wilson Baird

Biblical Theology. Editors: the Rev. Professor J. L. M. Haire and the Rev. A. A. Fulton. Published three times yearly in September, February and May. Single copies 2s. each; one year's subscription 5s. post free.

"Men in their generations are like the leaves of trees"—we are all familiar with Homer's simile and know the ground of the comparison he draws. It might be appositely extended to periodicals and journals. Even to-day, which has seen the demise of so many well-known ventures, witnesses the initiation of new enterprises. The above named journal, emanating from Belfast, with its May issue completed a first year of uncommonly vigorous, lively and useful existence. The *Scottish Journal of Theology* gladly takes the opportunity of warmly commending this admirable production to its own readers.

NEW TESTAMENT PERSPECTIVES

by The Rev. Professor H. P. OWEN

In recent years Biblical criticism has been assuming a new shape, or perhaps rather an old shape encompassing new contents. The contents are the data revealed by researches undertaken according to scientific method, and the shape is formed according to a desire to regain unity in place of diversity, theological understanding in place of a disconnected series of critical facts. It is felt, and felt rightly, that while our ancestors were led through ignorance into arbitrary, and even incorrect ways of regarding the Bible as a whole, at least it must be laid to their credit that they did set out to see it as a whole; moreover that we after their example should attempt to move from analysis to synthesis, from piecemeal examination of detail to a synoptic view of that structure into which the details will be seen to fit. Such a movement is in full flow, being assisted by many an able hand.

One important form which the movement has taken has been an effort to view the Old and New Testaments in their broadest interrelation.[1] The motto of the new approach is provided by St. Augustine: *Novum Testamentum in Vetere latet, Vetus Testamentum in Novo patet.* Certainly this is a welcome approach. The two Testaments have been treated independently. The meaning of the one has not been used to extract the meaning of the other. If there is any one root failure, it may well be that having forsaken untenable theories of Inspiration, we have ceased to believe in any. On the one hand the Old Testament has been left either with the discussion of the possible influence upon it of neighbouring Pagan cultures or at best with an insistence upon the religious and moral insights of the prophets. On the other hand the New Testament has often been, and in some Continental quarters still is, viewed chiefly in the light of

[1] How this determination to see a unified sequence in both Testaments involves a change in the focus of attention has been well illustrated by R. V. G. Tasker, *The Old Testament in the New Testament*, p. 16. For a general discussion of this interrelation see Richardson, *Christian Apologetics*, pp. 188-201.

its Pagan environment. Even when due regard has been paid to Jewish origins the full significance of the text has been missed because the fact has been forgotten that for Jewish Christians the sacred Scriptures were the books of our Old Testament. Against these tendencies the emphasis is timely that in Divine Intention and therefore in historical presentation the two Testaments are one. And having learned something during the past century of how to deal intelligently with the historical presentation, we may hope that our attempts to discern unity will possess a ground in history which will make the result more in keeping with the Divine Intention than was possible at a pre-critical stage.

Existence, the realist philosopher maintains, is prior to apprehension. Whether or not that is so within the terms of the time-hallowed argument, it is a theological assumption when existence means "What God brings into existence by His creative will" and apprehension means "human apprehension". God, we believe, has worked out and continues to work out, a pattern in human history which only He understands fully and parts of which no man understands at all. This is particularly true of Biblical history where we are confronted with an objective process, but one which by reason of its specially revelatory character admits of clearer understanding than the rest of history. The consciousness of being confronted with the objective is integral to the New Testament. Its authors were witnesses to what God had done when He chose to visit and redeem His people. What they recorded was what God in His sure counsels had brought to pass. No group of people were, and in the nature of the case could be, so aware of their role as recipients. They were witnesses (and the Apostles special witnesses, Acts 1.22) to a series of revelations which had their source in God (Acts 2.23, 32), were grounded in indisputable evidence (1 John 1.1) and were marked by a unique saving power precisely because they were revealed before they were discovered (note the gradual disclosure of Jesus in Mark's Gospel). Consequently no group of people was less inclined to translate the objective by the language of the subjective. Their perspectives were "given" perspectives, "given" not in the sense that they are incorrigible by us or anyone else, but given in the sense that they arose spontaneously from the impact (as they believed)

of God's sovereign rule upon them through the events of their own time. Their perspectives deserve careful attention.

What I wish to do is not to examine afresh the various ways in which the Old Testament is fulfilled in the New nor to suggest a critique for the evaluation of specific fulfilments, but rather to attempt some statement of the basic relation which New Testament writers held to subsist between the Old Testament and the events which they describe, and which constituted the centre of their living. In what perspective was the old dispensation, and especially its sacred record, viewed by those to whom was first delivered the new?

There can be no doubt that the Old Testament was regarded as a sacred book. There was no alternative. The Old Testament was the most treasured property of the Jews. Christianity began, and as far as Rome was concerned for some time continued, as a Jewish sect. To have denied its Jewish origin would have been to deny itself, but a vital element in that origin was the Scriptures. Marcion was a possible phenomenon only when the Church had undergone considerable independent development. In New Testament times Christians needed to be reminded not that they were sprung from Judaism, but rather that in their new faith they had outgrown Judaism. Reversion not treachery to tradition was the danger. Not that retention of the Scriptures was due to an unreflecting adherence to the past, not even the past as the precedent links in a chain which continued into the present and looked forward to an apocalyptic culmination in the future. The past, and its literary counterparts, were prized because it was a past of which the present was the unique and exhaustive fulfilment. The form of early preaching which can be construed from the speeches of Peter in Acts gives prominent place to the claim that in Jesus is fulfilled the prophecies concerning Him in the Old Testament. If Israel was to receive "seasons of refreshing" (Acts 3.19), that would be because the ancient Scriptures were understood in their new, final sense. If some Jews still rejected Christ then it would not be for any lack of rational connexion to go upon, so much as for a deadly blindness that had dogged Israel ever since Yahweh had adopted her.

The note of fulfilment which characterises the Kerygma was thoroughly in accordance with the outlook of the historical

Jesus. His mission was that of a Jew to Jews, such as to justify Paul's remarkable designation of Him as "a minister of the circumcision" (Rom. 15.8).[1] His common place of teaching was the synagogue where the Scriptures were reverently read, expounded, and used as the text-book of instruction (John 18.20; Luke 4.16 ff.). It is certain from His selective quotations that Jesus meditated much upon Scripture and, although attempts to "psychologise" Him are frowned upon to-day, one may assume that the way in which the novel character of His mission came home to Him was through the Spirit's operation in lighting up for Him certain texts in Scripture previously disjoined (Mark 1.10, 11). And if He recognised in Himself the fulfilment of those promises vouchsafed to Israel in the Scriptures, He might naturally expect His disciples to share that recognition (Luke 24.25-27 and 45-47, although this seems to be the one and only systematic exposition given by the Lord Himself).

That the men who wrote our New Testament and the communities which they represented remained firm in their attitude was historically desirable, since only so were the sacred Scriptures saved from becoming the exclusive possession of the Jewish persecutors once the Christians had been formally expelled from the synagogue, and only so was the essential quality of the new faith as one to which time and the action of God in time was supremely relevant made sure of preservation. That this conviction of unity between the Scriptures and the events of which the Christians were witnesses was genuine and not assumed is demonstrated by the fact that it was steadily continued by authors of such different interests as Paul and the author of Hebrews in a form integral to their main argument, and continued when non-Jewish elements in their thought might have been expected to obscure it. Extraneous apologetic dissociated from the mainspring of personal faith would not have been capable of this sustained development. The perception of New Testament Christianity in this matter was deep-seated or, as we might say to-day, "existential".

New Testament writers are not hesitant in their description of the unity which binds the events of the new dispensation to those of the old as recorded in Scripture. Their description follows a trinitarian scheme. The unity is due primarily to

[1] See the interesting evidence collected in the *Westminster Historical Atlas*, p. 86.

God, as the one according to whose Providence all history is ordered. The ascription of unity to God *simpliciter* receives its classical expression in the opening verses of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Yet there are further bold specifications. The ontological ground, as it were, of the capacity which the new possesses to see in itself the fruition of the old is located in the pre-existent activity of that Holy Spirit which was the energising principle of the new life and in the person of Christ whose spirit it was and from whom it proceeded (Gal. 3.14, 1 Peter 1.11). When Paul spoke of Christ as the Rock which was with the Israelites in the wilderness he was giving quasi-substantial form to what was felt to be a necessary speculative assumption, even if it was a form which would occur only to a person who had undergone Rabbinical training.[1] The central thesis that runs through a variety of expressions is that the Scriptures were the first half of a unitary revelation, and that they were so by their very nature in God's economy. It is but one step forward to say that they were intrinsically meant for the confirmation of what they foreshadowed (Rom. 15.4, Gal. 3.8).

The Old and New dispensations then were linked by the unity of divine intention and the identity of divine operation. It was a living bond constructed by God and in no wise imposed by man. Precisely because the union was so intimate and profound the Scriptures could not be anything but themselves divine. Divine they were, but also (as A. G. Hebert has reminded us) incomplete. It is this incompleteness which, I think, has not been sufficiently stressed of late in writings on the subject. The very character indeed of the Scriptures as divinely inspired oracles was bound up with their incompleteness, their deficiency when taken by themselves. Their status in the orderings of Providence was provisional—provisional not in the sense that they would ever be superseded so as to be rendered obsolete, but provisional as documents the key to whose meaning was to come from a source outside themselves.

This incompleteness is perhaps nowhere more directly stated than in 1 Peter 1.10-13. This is a curious passage. After describing the strenuous, anxious, almost perplexed character of

[1] The reason why the pre-existent activity of the Son is somewhat rarely mentioned in this connexion is suggested by Floyd V. Filson, *The New Testament against its Environment*, pp. 62-3.

the prophetic quest, the author says that: "it was revealed (sc. to the prophets) that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you, etc. . . ". Commentators rightly point out that such a revelation is not recorded, nor any such consciousness of limitation. 1 Peter really contradicts himself since if this revelation had been vouchsafed there would have been no need for such an agonising search. What has happened is that the author has suddenly switched from an historical review to a contemporary theory. He ascribes to the prophets (and I am assuming against Selwyn that the Old Testament prophets are meant here) an awareness of limitation which only Christians could possess. In v. 12 of ch. 1 there open up the categories of the Apostolic Church, foisted incongruously on to generations which could not experience them.

The notion that the Old Testament writings are essentially incomplete receives its most philosophical formulation in the Epistle to the Hebrews. No less does a book in many ways dissimilar disclose the same attitude. A favourite formula in Matthew's Gospel is one used to introduce quotations taken from the Scriptures: "that it might be fulfilled." Now this English translation means for us, if we expand it, something as follows: "in order that what was just a verbal prediction might gain factual embodiment." Yet in the Greek ἵνα πληρωθῇ the further idea seems present that what we have in the Old Testament is something incomplete which reaches completion only in the events which the Evangelist records. Reference is made not only to the actualisation of the verbal, but also to the fruition (*teleiosis* in the conceptual scheme of Hebrews) of the defective.[1] The fulfilment of any Old Testament text would mean its clarification through its actualisation. Fulness in reality imparts fulness (=completeness) in meaning. To take as an example the quotation from Hosea contained in Matthew 2.15. This was the word of a prophet. Now the prophet's function here is one of "forth-telling" rather than of "foretelling". He is symbolising in his own language an event—the event—in Israel's past. When he proclaimed this word there was no element of

[1] A well substantiated meaning for πληρόω is "to make full, complete". (See the references given to classical and *Koine* sources in L. & S. Ed. Stuart Jones.) This idea of making complete what would otherwise be deficient is clearly present in Matt. 3.15 and especially 5.17 with which compare Rom. 13.10.

prediction in it. The element of prediction enters in only when we regard the saying as incomplete. This incompleteness may be indicated by calling the saying multiform. It can refer to more than one content *in rebus*; as a typological symbol it is variable. It is only when the final content, Jesus Christ, is taken into account that its imperfection is grasped. Once grasped its predictive quality follows and the ἵνα πληρωθῇ formula becomes doubly valid. I have selected this example because it shows how the idea of defectiveness in meaning underlies the idea of non-actualisation in fact.

The dogma that apart from Christ the Old Testament is deficient in meaning is strongly enunciated in 2 Cor. 3.12-18. Paul's aim in this chapter is to draw the contrast between the letter and the spirit. This leads him on to a brief but penetrating distinction between the Jewish and the Christian understanding of the Scriptures. He seeks to show that apart from Christ the Jews are subject to an invincible ignorance. They are necessarily, by a divinely imposed necessity, incapable of seeing the imperfect, deficient quality of their Scriptures. They treat the relative unconditionally as an absolute; there is a veil spread over their minds. The climax for our purpose is reached in v. 16: "but when a man turns to Christ the veil is removed." Not that the succeeding two verses are irrelevant. They stress that it is personal, inward knowledge of Christ that is the starting-point for a correct evaluation of the Old Testament. It is important to note how forcefully two points emerge. Paul states that the basic error of the Jews is metaphysical. They fail to perceive accurately the status in reality of the material in their possession. Again this error in metaphysical perspectives can be remedied only if recourse is had to Him in whom the divine δόξα is fully revealed. The movement through which a convert was expected to pass was threefold. Firstly he looked at the Scriptures. He might, if a thinking man, be bewildered (see Acts 8.34). Then he looked to Christ, and then back again at the Scriptures. The last stage would be ranged synoptically with the second and the unified impression should be: "All the promises of God in him are yea" (2 Cor. 1.20). "Il s'agit ici d'un cercle."[1]

[1] Cullman, *Christ et le Temps*, p. 97. For an interesting account of the contrasting attitude found in Barnabas see pp. 94-5.

This is the fundamental standpoint of the New Testament. The Scriptures and the truths revealed through Christ were elements in a continuous historical series; they were unified by the God who originated both and disposed each to be comprehended in a single whole. Yet taken in themselves the Scriptures were incomplete, deficient. This deficiency was rectified only when they were viewed side by side with realities whose ground lay outside themselves. These realities were to be understood independently through faith awakened by the Holy Spirit. Nothing is gained and everything is lost by speaking, as one author has recently done, of "hidden senses" or "hidden potentialities" which God has "locked in" the Old Testament text and which it is left for Christians to "unravel".[1] Such language ignores the inescapable element of *synthesis*. The meaning of the Old Testament becomes apparent only when alongside it is placed the fresh revelation in Christ. Its *raison d'être* is to coexist with this revelation which succeeds it in time as it precedes it in interpretative value.

This imperfection inherent in the Old Testament (which the language of Coppens slurs over) bore for New Testament Christianity somewhat the same relation to the events of which it was an incomplete representation as, for Plato, the world of sense bore to the world of intelligible essences.[2] Each stood to the other as *genesis* to *ousia*, becoming to being. The parallel may be extended. Plato would have said that the proper method of viewing the sensible world was in the light of a thorough grasp of the intelligible. Only to philosophers could it be entrusted to descend into the cave and to deal properly with what is found there. People who had never travelled beyond the cave were as blind as Paul's Jews. Because the lower world was imperfect only independent insight into the higher world could enable men to see the lower for what it was, and not to treat it as self-sufficient. Similarly the imperfect, and so the divinely intended, quality of the Scriptures cannot be seen unless an independent grasp is attained of that perfect revelation against which previous imperfection stands out. If

[1] Coppens, *Les Harmonies des deux Testaments*, pp. 44-5.

[2] So when the author of Hebrews applies Platonic vocabulary to the sequence of God's historical revelation he is not constructing an unnatural alliance between philosophy and religion, since the perspectives he wants to express are essentially those of an historicised Platonism.

we are to follow the New Testament there is primarily demanded a direct, personal apprehension of the Gospel and the figure around whom it centres. In the light of this primary apprehension proper insight into the Scriptures emerges and a strong and convincing apologetic is to hand. Understanding and right use of the Old Testament is a function of our response to the Good News.

There are two special factors to which attention might be drawn in this connexion.

1. When we ask the question: "What was the fundamental factor in the religious awareness of New Testament Christianity?", we should probably give the answer in one word—Christ. This is an unexceptionable reply in that the whole gamut of possible human activities and divine-human relationships find their centre in Him. Christo-centricity is the dominant note in every book. Yet that note once struck is accompanied by another one. The other note is less personal, less precise, but indicative of a vast change in consciousness, perhaps vaster than any one expression of it can convey. That is the consciousness that a new age, *the* new age has arrived.

How this theme unravels itself in the records is a fascinating story. The first reaction to Jesus is a remark on the "newness" of His teaching (Mark 1.27). Near the beginning of His public ministry Jesus speaks the parable, puzzling perhaps to His hearers but devastating in its keenness, about the challenge of His new teaching (Mark 2.21, 22). That challenge was to be a great rock of offence, and happy indeed was the man who was not offended in Him. As with Jesus, so with His chosen instruments. When the Jews of Thessalonica complain that Paul and Silas are turning the world upside down they bear negative testimony to a positive fact (Acts 17.6). And when Paul wishes to make his claim for our redemption most pointed, he chooses at the same time to state the essential "newness" of all who are in Christ (2 Cor. 5).

What was new was not just man, having received the image of Christ and being renewed according to His mind (Rom. 12.2, Col. 3.10), but the age. This was a new age, or at least the inalienable and saving foretastes of it (Heb. 6.5). The whole ordering of the world was subject to a new power and correspondingly new valuations. When Paul told the Corinthians

that they were those upon whom "the ends of the ages are come" (1 Cor. 10.11) he was giving rightful place to the foremost article in the Lord's own Galilean preaching which began with the announcement that the time, the critical time (ὁ καιρός) was fulfilled. There were given in Christ and His Church the features of a new age, which, come at the appointed time, was at once a present joy and a future hope. It was the sphere into which the Christian was born. Those who were not Christians lived in a quite different sphere, the old order subject to decay and wretchedness for which another word was simply the world (Gal. 1.4, 6.8, and Eph. 2.2-7).

The advent of a new age was of course heralded in part in prophecy as it was born in part of expectation. Yet while the prophecy and the expectation were there, they were not in any sense definitive of the outcome. The bare fact of a new age might have been predicted, but its contours, much more its life-giving spirit came as things unprecedented, unpredicted and altogether original. And it is the experience of history at a god-given moment being utterly transformed that constitutes the most radical *Sitz im Leben* for the student of the New Testament. The estimate of the past no less than the prospect for the future was grounded in the sense that: *Magnus ab integro saeculorum nascitur ordo.*

2. In many unambiguous passages the New Testament is not slow to own that the life received in Christ is intrinsically beyond the reach of prediction. The opening of the heavens at the Baptism and Transfiguration of Jesus are pictorial expressions of what was felt to be deeply true, that the divine activity there witnessed was not any imaginable climax to an historical series, but was of a nature which utterly transcended known modes of activity and so challenged known modes of understanding. The action of God in Jesus assumed the aspect of something irruptive. There is never far off from any strand in New Testament theology the Johannine doctrine of the Word made flesh.

Mark 4.11, 12 is a celebrated crux. Even if these verses reflect the view of the Church rather than the teaching of Jesus, a significance can, I think, be attached to v. 11, which is perhaps often missed. The Greek word for mystery was used in the LXX for a secret. In the Apostolic Church the Gospel was

a mystery, a secret not in the sense of being an enigma which only specialists could resolve, but an "open" and "revealed" secret. The Gospel was the announcement of God's eternal purposes of grace for men, previously concealed and now freely disclosed (Rom. 16.25, 26; Col. 1.27). The secret which Jesus disclosed was God's Reign. The quality of that Reign, its vital connexion with the person of the Messiah, the manner of its appearing had not been apprehended before. It was revealed in Jesus and was to cause the gravest scandal. All things were committed directly to Jesus by the Father, and not least the secret of how He meant the universe to be governed. We notice that no proof-text is invoked to preface the preaching of the Kingdom in the Synoptic Gospels, nor is Jesus recorded as using any when He sent out the Twelve on their mission. No proof-text could be used. It is interesting to observe that it is a M logion which records the following words with reference to Jesus' parables: "I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 13.35).

The Transfiguration is an episode very relevant to our purpose. Its typology has been carefully worked over, and we have learned much.[1] Yet as we read through the narrative we find that the typology is gradually shed, for the climax is surely reached when Jesus is "seen" or "found" *alone* (Matt. 17.8 = Mark 9.8 = Luke 9.36). The final stress is not upon Jesus as the fulfiller of Law and Prophecy; it is upon Jesus as a solitary figure that our attention is fixed. The whole point of the typology is that having been introduced it should vanish before Him whom the voice has declared Son of God and who declared Himself Son of Man. It was the mistake of Peter to suppose that Jesus could be brought conveniently within the orbit of the old dispensation (Matt. 17.4 = Mark 9.5 = Luke 9.33). Even after Caesarea Philippi Peter had not grasped the uniqueness of Him whom he confessed as Christ.

It is to the Fourth Gospel that we turn for the most precise and uncompromising statement of the conviction that in Jesus was a revelation far transcending anything that had gone before. The Prologue, for all its Jewish colouring, is meant to assert that in Christ was evidenced a *mode* of divine activity unique

[1] See, e.g. Daniélou, *Sacramentum Futuri*, p. 138, and A. M. Ramsey, *The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ*, pp. 112-23.

and unpredicted. The advent of the Word incarnate was the seal and symbol of a new order (1.14, 17). The word of old was present in a diffused way throughout the universe, but the whole Gospel lay in the critical difference that now the word was made determinate in one man.

The technical vocabulary of the Prologue does not recur. Yet throughout the book the same antithesis between the old and the new is driven home to His hearers by Jesus Himself in language appropriate to the living moment of the religious experience itself. The antithesis is perhaps most succinctly expressed in 6.31-33. The true bread from heaven came not in the wilderness through Moses, but is given now directly by the Father. Why this is so is disclosed in v. 33: "For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." Christ is the final embodiment of Old Testament prefigurations because He stands outside the historical series of which He is the culmination. He cannot be understood as the last term in that series unless He is antecedently understood as a being whose origin resides outside it. Correlatively that series itself cannot be properly evaluated unless there is a prior apprehension of the transcendent Christ. Historical process is to be understood in the light of Him whose essential nature is supra-historical. That we should need the descent of Him whose home is beyond the world of space and time to provide the key to that world is as conclusively stated in the Fourth Gospel as it well can be. It is from the solitary Christ in His solitary communion with His Father that we start and to Him we return. In between we may see much summed up in Him, but this summing up will only serve to confirm our first impression of His uniqueness, so that "in our beginning is our end".

The Fourth Gospel is always required to bring into relief the presupposed structure of the other three. It is not by any means a purely Greek product. On the contrary, it is full of reference to the Scriptures and various aspects of Jewish religious life. It is a happy hunting-ground for the typologist, and even if it was not originally written in Aramaic the appropriateness of its language becomes clearer sometimes if we suppose that the author knew Hebrew. It is still important to exhibit Jesus as Messiah (20.31), and salvation is still to be seen as proceeding from within a special nation whom God had chosen

and prepared (4.22). On one occasion moreover Jesus can be represented as claiming that an honest reading of the Scriptures would be sufficient to produce belief in Himself (5.46). Nevertheless the last perspective is the transcendent Christ. Jesus the Palestinian teacher, Jesus the Messiah of Jewish forecast, Jesus who gathered to Himself a new community within Israel—all these facets of Jesus which were the main ingredients in the Synoptic picture of Him are to be held constantly against the background of His deep fellowship with the Father which was as unparalleled as the relationship upon which it was based was unique. It is from the vantage-point of the intimate communion which He enjoyed with the Father (a vantage-point which we may share if we are "branches" of His "vine") that history is to be surveyed, since that is in a real if difficult sense the vantage-point of eternity within time: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am" (8.58).

It was admitted, then, that to become a Christian was to enter a new order of which Christ was the fountain head and first member. Creation had been given a new start, minds a new orientation and hearts a new hope. The Pagans lived in the old order, Christians in the new. The vital difference between the two classes of men comprising the Church and the world was that they belonged to two distinct epochs in history. Life was henceforth lived according to either the old man, Adam, or the new man, Christ.

If challenged to give some sort of definition of a Christian disciple, we should speak of "believing" in or "accepting" Christ and the God revealed in Him and then proceed to offer an account of the various ways—cognitive, ethical, institutional—in which this belief or acceptance found effect. In so doing we should indeed be using New Testament language, but until we had construed the Christian life as entrance into a new order of existence (which is something more than the conversion of individual souls as the "evangelical" seeks it), we should have fallen short of the New Testament experience. This was an experience of clear contrast between the failure, frustrations and weariness of life in the old order and the blessedness, assurance and exhilaration of life in the new.[1] It was in the context

[1] The contrasts light-darkness, life-death, etc., which recur in the New Testament as stock themes in Christian *didache* are specifications of the essential contrast new-old.

of this sense of the newness of all things for the man in Christ that any reflections upon the preparation for the Gospel in sacred history and writing were set. The preparation was part of the old order and the deficiency of the Old Covenant was part of the deficiency of the old order in general. There were undoubtedly anticipations in prophecy of such a new order, yet no substance and final meaning was imparted to them until God had uncovered the mystery of a truly unsearchable love and sent His own Son: "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them" (Luke 10.23, 24).

On the basis of these presuppositions the writers of the New Testament were ready not only to adapt for their purpose this text or that, but even to re-arrange the whole form of prophecy. The significant fact is that so strong and unconditional were the presuppositions that the re-arrangements could proceed awares. This re-arrangement occurs in the prominence allotted to the figure of the Messiah. The pivot of Mark's Gospel, it is now generally recognised, is the confession of Peter at Caesarea Philippi: "Thou art the Christ." Attention is directed away from the words and actions of Jesus to His person as Messiah. Once that attention is gained Jesus is free to increase the stringency of the demands laid upon His disciples. The terms of service are harder, and the harder they become the clearer it appears that they are terms required by loyalty to the Messiah Himself. Loyalty or disloyalty to Him will be the issue at stake at the *Parousia*. The eschatological character of salvation is preserved, and its ground is to be a steadfast fidelty to the Messiah who has already come.

The degree to which Jesus revised Jewish Messianic notions is fully realised to-day. Indeed it was realised by Paul who declared that his preaching of a suffering Messiah—the doctrine of the Cross—was "unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness" (1 Cor. 1.23). What is not so often seen is that an equally drastic revision was involved in the very fact that such a central position was assigned to the Messiah in the first place. This centrality hardly emerges from Jewish prophecy and apocalyptic. There the Messiah, if mentioned at all,

is invoked only as the agent of a sudden divine fiat. He is far from being what Jesus was, the saving object of trust, obedience, love and even worship. The actual Messiah far outmeasured the predicted one in his qualities, significance and claims. The person of the Messiah was for the New Testament the mirror in which all prophecy and anticipation was to be reflected. It was a revealed form under which the given content of the old dispensation was to be subsumed. A change is all the more significant if it is conducted silently.

Admittedly the perspectives of the New Testament are not invariable. It would seem that Christian preachers were capable of expecting conversion to proceed from an examination of the Scriptures alone as if from them, if only the scrutiny was careful enough, the Gospel could be evolved.[1] Still, this was not a strong strain. It ran counter to deeper tendencies and was prompted by the desire, misplaced but not wholly ignoble, for the quick Christianisation of Israel. This tendency is most noticeable in the early chapters of Acts where we find Peter more than a little conciliatory towards the Jews and certainly over-hopeful about the imminence of "seasons of refreshing". Thus in 2.22-36 Peter expects too much to come from an argument based on proof-texts. Take the sequence in vv. 24-25. The reason given for the impossibility of death's taking a hold on Jesus is that David prophesied otherwise of Him. So the passage is closed with the assertion that the items of the Kerygma are an inference from premises contained in the Old Testament (v. 36). More striking still is 3.17. Peter is willing to allow that it was through ignorance (ἄγνοια) that the Jews killed the Prince of Life, and v. 18 makes it clear that what he has in mind is ignorance of Scripture.

The positive implication is that knowledge of their Scriptures would have kept the Jews from their dreadful crime. What we have to remember is firstly that the Kerygma is presented in a schematic form which might well have involved some falsification, secondly that an exaggerated view of the

[1] This was the belief of Alexandrian Exegetes. The Old Testament had only to be analysed ingeniously enough and Christian truths would emerge, much as conclusions in mathematics can be deduced from a given set of axioms and postulates; the new could be demonstrated from the old. Bigg's terse criticism of this attitude is one which the author of Hebrews would have endorsed: "But the shadow is not a demonstration, for the very reason that it is a shadow" (*The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, p. 149).

apologetic value of Scripture might naturally have prevailed in the early days of the Church at Jerusalem, and thirdly that such isolated texts must be seen in proportion. For throughout the speeches of Peter the primary appeal is hortatory and personal rather than explanatory and quasi-intellectual. What is to be elicited is not any process of deductive reasoning, but an attitude of faith in the Lord Jesus. Elements of prediction were subordinated to that immediate experience of Jesus of which the outward sign was charismatic fervour. Vv. 22-36 in ch. 2 are after all a preamble to the direct invitation in v. 38: "Repent and be baptised everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."[1] In the account given of Peter's speech before Cornelius in Acts 10.34-43 there is a rehearsal of the acts of the historical Jesus followed by references to His crucifixion and resurrection; it is not until the *closing* verse that mention is made of Him as fulfiller of prophecy. The witness of the apostles to Christ as a new factor in Israel (v. 39) is given precedence over the witness borne to Him by the Old Testament prophets (v. 43). Christ must be apprehended independently if He is to be apprehended in conjunction with those whose utterances anticipated Him. As independent insight could alone produce the repentance that led to belief, so with equal certainty only from within it could proceed a joyful acceptance of prophecy as fulfilled. If it was not clear to the Apostles at the outset it must have become clear later that the reason why so many Jews continued to refuse acknowledgment of Jesus as the Christ was not because they were inattentive to the Scriptures or unskilled in interpreting them, but because they lacked as a presupposition that independent apprehension of Jesus in His risen power which would come not through elaborate argumentation, however cogently presented, but through the gift of the Spirit bestowed upon those who, like the exemplary figure at the

[1] Similarly with the record of Paul's Kerygma in Acts. In the very first account of his preaching after conversion he is said to have "confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ" (9.22). The verbs here used are strong. Was Paul attempting too much? Fresh adherents to a faith are wont to forget how much arguments they consider convincing gain conviction only because of certain presuppositions. The new power of these presuppositions makes them temporarily blind to this fact. Paul used the Old Testament as apologetic material until the end. We leave him doing so at Rome, but we note two things: he seeks now not to "demonstrate" but to "persuade" and he prefaces his exposition of the old with a bold declaration of the new (28.23).

beginning of Luke-Acts waited for the "consolation of Israel" and were prepared humbly to receive it however it should come. The Gospel had to be experienced as a shock, a surprise, a wholly new event before the Scriptures could render it familiar.

The perspectives of the New Testament are dominated by the present (and the future in so far as hope for the future springs directly from the present), not by the past. The great facts are present ones, being the first signs and sure groundwork of a new age: the Kingdom of God has come, Jesus has been crucified only to rise again as indisputable Lord of all creation, His spirit is active to constitute a community of those who believe in Him, the new life of Love is operative here and now. The past enters in under the severe criticism of the present. By itself it is unclear, incomplete, deficient, "veiled".[1] Admission of what is completely new and unpredicted must precede recourse to the old and predicted. The true pattern of sacred history cannot be discerned by the mind before its culmination has been apprehended by personal faith. Only such faith with its concomitant sense that "all things have become new" can free the mind for its task of interpretation. The land is indeed a promised one, yet only for that man who has first trodden it with His own feet.

The perspectives of the New Testament were soon validated. Paul won his victory over the Judaisers, and adherence to the old dispensation at the expense of the new was restricted to a comparatively small group who made no headway against the main tradition. The genius of the new religion was not endangered by regard for prophecy and law apart from the absolute norm discoverable in Christ. So far as the Church was to meet danger from Jewish quarters it was, in the New Testament period and afterwards, from various types of Gnostic speculation popularised in Diasporate Judaism. This danger was distinctively Pagan, not Jewish. And if the Church was kept from degenerating into a curious Jewish sect by its strong conviction of the transcendence of the Gospel, no less was it strengthened against Pagan sophistries by its refusal to forget the continuation of the Gospel with its Old Testament preparation. The final break with Judaism was assured by the recog-

[1] "The significance of the pre-Christian events is not really clear until their unity with the decisive central action is discerned" (Floyd V. Filson, op. cit., p. 56).

nition that the old dispensation and its records were provisional, and within their own rights deficient to the point of powerlessness. The triumph of Christ over the "gods many" of the Mediterranean world and their rarefied successors in Gnostic myth was possible because of the fundamental belief that the God revealed in Christ was "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob".

ESCHATOLOGY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

by The Rev. Professor G. A. F. KNIGHT

The Hebrews had an ineradicably "whole" view of life and the universe. We Westerners, whose educational system rests upon the assumption of the "Greeks" that matter and spirit are separate entities, find it hard to think as the Old Testament thinks. Plato was not the first of the philosophers to dissociate the realm of ideas from the realm of things, since some of the Ionian philosophers before him had already conceived that truth is the truth of propositions. One result of such a dichotomy was the conception that matter or things are not so important or even so real as are ideas; it is the study of the world of ideas, or of the world of spiritual values, which primarily leads mankind to a knowledge of God.

The contrary view of the Hebrews may perhaps be envisaged through the analogy of a coin. A coin has two sides. Reality, similarly, may be conceived as a two-sided whole. On the one side reality consists of the things which comprise the physical universe. The multiplicity of facts which we recognise in inanimate nature may be examined and weighed, using the scientific method, and the fruits of scientific discovery may then be put to the use of man; but the world of matter which can be studied and analysed is only one side of our coin. The other side may indeed be out of sight, and even for the time being out of mind; but the man who holds our coin before him is not in consequence excused from the results of his forgetfulness. That is to say, everything that is and happens on the one side of the coin, i.e. in the world of matter, is necessarily of significance in the world of the spirit, says the Hebrew mind. You cannot stand the coin on end and cleave it down the middle between its two faces. *Per contra*, what is on the "spirit" side of the coin is indissolubly integrated with the "material" face of the coin which represents the "wholeness" of reality.

This indissoluble relation between matter and spirit seems to have been observable to the mind of the Hebrew in every

aspect of life and thought. Anyway, he takes it for granted both within himself and without himself.

(*a*) He takes it for granted in his own experience of being a person. For example, when a man is afraid, he is affected not only spiritually, but also physically. As well as knowing fear in his "mind" he has the feeling that his hair is standing on end. When a man reads a letter containing bad news, he feels a constriction in the throat. When he is excited, a shiver runs down his spine. His "bowels turn within him" as a natural concomitant of the spiritual experience of compassion. Indeed, the whole range of the relationship between the physical and the mental in Old Testament man is a study in itself. Of recent years attention has been turned to the psycho-physical functions of the various organs of the body, such as the heart, the kidneys, the liver, the bowels, as well as the more obviously used hand, eye, ear and mouth, to see what internal experience is felt by the organ in question. As a result we are aware to-day as never before that at all levels of thought in the Old Testament the conception does not arise of man's being a union of soul and body. He may speak of one and then of the other, as he may speak of the "heads" and the "tails" on the coin; but all the time Old Testament man thinks of himself as just a man, one entity. The Psalmist who cries: "My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee" (Ps. 63.1), is unable, it would seem, to cleave down the middle the coin that represents his experience of being a man.

(*b*) He takes it for granted also in the world of nature. It is well known that the Hebrews admitted of no secondary causes in nature. If it rained or snowed, the finger of Jahweh was directly responsible, not low pressure areas or the heat of the sun causing evaporation of the ocean. If there were famine or drought, it was without question "the Lord's doing". Consequently the Hebrews were unable to say confidently what the relation of inanimate things is to the world of the spirit, since the two are in a sense aspects of each other. The parallelism of Hebrew poetry, in which the same idea is expressed in two different ways, often shows this "whole" view of reality in nature just as it does in man. The great verse in Job (38.7), "When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy", makes the inference that the stars, and the

angels of the stars, are merely two aspects of one and the same thing. Indeed, the phrase "host of heaven" (e.g. Judges 5.20; Joshua 5.14; Isa. 24.21, 40.26, 45.12; Jer. 33.22; Ps. 33.6; Neh. 9.6) is again and again quite ambiguous in its use—from our "Greek" point of view, that is to say.

According to Hebrew thought there is one power, however, and one alone, which is able to disrupt this integration between spirit and matter that is willed by God to be the nature of reality, and that power is sin. But sin is itself observable from the same two points of view. Before the Fall, we are told, man walked in his pristine uprightness of heart in perfect fellowship with God. But no sooner does the Old Testament speak of a Fall in the realm of man's spirit, than it declares that that Fall has consequences for the whole of nature, or matter (Gen. 3.16-18, 6.7). Moreover, what is true of the disruption in man's world is simultaneously true of the heavenly places (Gen. 6.2) since the Universe is one indivisible whole. That is to say, like all else in heaven and earth sin too has a two-sided significance. When therefore we turn our attention to the eschatological thinking of the Hebrews, we shall be right to expect that it also will have a corresponding two-sidedness to it. In other words, Old Testament Eschatology must have to do with both heaven and earth, with both spirit and matter, *pari passu*. By the very nature of Hebrew thinking it cannot be concerned with one and ignore the other. The End must be concerned with the world of things as much as with the world of the spirit.

The Old Testament student is aware, of course, that he will find no "doctrine" of Eschatology in the books of the Old Testament any more than he will find a doctrine of anything else. What he will discover are the living thoughts of a people that is conscious at all times of both sides of this coin of ours, since his thoughts have come to him from the living God, who has made *both* heaven and earth. If this people can use with insouciance a word such as *mal' ach* which may mean either a heavenly or an earthly messenger as the context may demand, or the word *dabhar*, which may mean both 'word' and word incarnate, i.e. "thing", at one and the same time, then the student need not expect to find a neat separation of heaven and earth in matters eschatological either. All he may expect to do is to pick out of the Old Testament a number of separate strands of

eschatological thought, some of which may not seem even to be loosely related to their fellows. All of these various strands, however, take on meaning and significance, not only in separation, but also in their mutual relation one with the other, when viewed in the light of the New Testament revelation.

(*a*) *Son of David.* The line of kings that bore this title was a line of very average men indeed; some of them were warriors, others were cruel tyrants, while others were religious to a degree, or were as keen on reforms as were their prophet advisers. But a divinely appointed king is necessarily of cosmic significance, just because he is divinely appointed. Mowinckel has propounded the theory that Israel held an annual enthronement festival at which the "Son of David" was hailed as God Himself, to the chanting of the words "Jahweh has become King" by the people before his throne (cf. Pss. 47, 93-100). If this theory has any basis in reality, then what we have before us is not a case of idolatry or blasphemy but a vivid consciousness that what is eternally true of the heavenly places must necessarily have its counterpart on earth.

In the same manner the constant preoccupation of the prophets with a *Prince* that is to come (Isa. 9.6-7, 11.1; Jer. 30.9; Ezek. 34.24, 37.24-25) or, using another figure, with a dimly conceived personage called the *Branch* (Isa. 11.1; Jer. 23.5, 33.15; Zech. 3.8), is another aspect of this same point of view. In portraying from the picture in their mind these vague and roughly sketched ideas the prophets were not so much foretelling future events and outlining the form of someone whom they believed was still to come. Rather they were proclaiming their faith that what is true for the world of the spirit, even if it could only be dimly realised in rather vague terms (Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace) was bound eventually to become incarnate in space and time, once the disintegrating factor between spirit and matter, namely, sin, had been overcome and slain.

(*b*) *The ideal priest.* The whole development of the priesthood is seen in this same light, only, we might say, in inverted order to that followed in the Son of David concept. What God has already ordained on earth must necessarily be only the one side of our coin of reality, even though, because of the existence of sin, the significance of this "material" side of the coin has

not been fully apprehended. The interpretative method used by the Epistle to the Hebrews is thus in full accord with this characteristic approach of the Old Testament in seeing cosmic significance in those institutions which God had implanted in Israel's life. A High Priest did in fact finally appear, in whom there was no sin, with the result that He was immediately hailed by those who had eyes to see in the words of Ps. 110.4, as a priest *for ever* after the order of Melchizedek.

(*c*) *The holy city.* Zion is the "place of God's feet" (Isa. 60.13). Again, it is the place where God "has chosen to put His name there" (Deut. 12.5; 1 Kings 8.44). Since this is a fact, then the day must necessarily come when the Jerusalem on earth will be the counterpart of the Jerusalem above. The day when God overcomes the power of sin, the disintegrating factor, Jerusalem will have become a new Garden of Eden with battlements (Ps. 48.1-3; Zech. 14.8-9). Thus it is that the Songs of Ascent look forward to the time when all the nations of the earth will not only ascend into the hill of the Lord (Isa. 2.2; Ps. 24.3), but will also enter the heavenly Jerusalem above (Ps. 122).

(*d*) In the same regard we might examine the cosmic significance of such concepts as the *Good Shepherd* (cf. Zech. 13.7 and Ezek. 34.2 with Ezek. 34.11-12); *Judge* (Ps. 96.13; Mic. 6.1-3); *Saviour* (cf. Judges 3.9 and 2 Kings 13.5 with Isa. 43.11, 45.21, etc.); *Fountain of Life* (Zech. 13.1, 14.8; Ps. 46.4); and, of course, *Suffering Servant* (cf. Zech. 12.10, where it is the human king who is pierced, with Zech. 9.9 and Isa. 53).

(*e*) *The People of Israel.* So soon as Israel is chosen she becomes aware that she is God's firstborn son (Ex. 4.22), adopted to show forth on earth what is eternally true in the world of the spirit, viz., the eternal Father-Son relationship within the Godhead (Ex. 7.16; Isa. 49.3, 6). It is true that she does not succeed in doing so, since sin disrupts the perfect filial relationship. But it is from Israel's bosom that there does eventually come forth Another over whose head the words of Ex. 4.22 are spoken as He enters upon His ministry of revelation and who in Himself wholly integrates the two worlds of which the Hebrews are ever conscious, the world of the spirit and the world of matter.

Now the prophets of the Old Testament see that the time must come when such an integration must inevitably take place,

since God has purposed and promised to "deal" with sin from the beginning of the world. Consequently they are aware that when He does finally deal with it, He will have overcome it not only on earth, but also in the heavenly places, where dwell St. Paul's principalities and powers. They are confident that the *Day of the Lord* will find out and reveal the sin of the whole cosmos (Zeph. 1.2-3, 18; Job 15.14-15; Ps. 50.4; Isa. 13.13; Hag. 2.6, 21; Isa. 51.6) both in heaven above and on the earth beneath.

To that end the various indications of God's coming mighty salvation all bear in their wording a cosmic significance.

(i) *The Return of the Time of Moses* (Isa. 10.24, 41.18-20, 51.9-10) is looked forward to because at the first Exodus there had occurred events of eternal significance. Not only did God reveal Himself as *Ehyeh asher ehyeh*, as the living God of the heavens, now active in and through His people here on earth, but ethics too was revealed to be of eternal significance. The recognition of this important fact was made by Israel when she carried the Decalogue within the Ark of the Covenant (Ex. 25.16), the "tabernacle" on earth of Him whom the heaven of heavens could not contain.

(ii) *The New Covenant* (Jer. 31.31-34) is similarly seen in the light of the Revelation that had already taken place at Sinai. When it should eventuate the whole cosmos would be shaken by its significance (Joel 2.30-31).

(iii) Each *Messiah* as he appears is conceived as a kind of ἀρραβών of the eschatological integration of matter and spirit, whether he be Hezekiah, or Cyrus or Zerubbabel. Each brings some degree of peace (integration, harmony) as an evidence of the final harmony of all things. Moreover, apart altogether from Messiah as a person still to come, God has already given Israel the *Sabbath* day as an institution to be a kind of ἀρραβών of the perfect Sabbath peace in which God dwells above and beyond His disintegrated universe.

(iv) The *History of the Hebrews* is naturally seen in a similar light, once this given factor of "wholeness" is realised and used as an interpretative agent. Their history, they see, is meaningful, it is *Heilsgeschichte*; the rise and fall of kings and princes are not just the rise and fall of kings and princes: these things are also the mighty acts on earth of God who is Himself not of the

earth, but who is Spirit (Isa. 31.3), as He moves on towards the fulfilment of His purpose at the end of time.

(v) It is clear then that the End in Old Testament thinking must be concerned with, not just one, but with the two worlds of spirit and matter, the two sides of the coin, since the End is concerned with the "wholeness" of Reality, with the whole coin as such; it must also then be clear that Eschatology is no mere frill to Old Testament thinking, but integral and central to the whole Old Testament revelation. The End of all God's activities as recorded in the Old Testament is to be none other than the redemption of the whole cosmos. In other words, it is not just the redemption of man from the power of sin (far less the redemption of the "souls" of men out of a wicked world), it is the redemption, *pari passu*, of the heavenly places also from the power of sin.

It is the redemption of man. The Hebraic expression "Son of Man" or "Son of Adam" is applied to an Ezekiel who is indeed, as a sinner himself, one with the Old Adam of the Fall. But in Daniel 7.13 its use represents "the new divine community in which the will of God will be perfectly realised" (R. H. Charles). But such an integration is beyond the thought of "disintegrated" sinful man. He can only picture the one side of the coin that he knows and in which he lives. So he uses very "earthy" terms to describe the End—"old men and old women dwelling in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age" (Zech. 8.4-8, 14.10-11).

But it is also the redemption of the world of Nature. "In that Day" the desert will rejoice and blossom as the rose (Isa. 35.1), the lion will lie down with the ox, and "Nature red in tooth and claw" will know the peace of the Garden of Eden once again. Nay, more, the heavens themselves will be changed, will be redeemed from the power of the evil one (Jer. 11.12), in order to bring about the final integration of the two worlds, of matter and of spirit, so that, no longer divided by sin, the two will be one. Once more God will be seen by Adam's eyes walking in the garden in the cool of the day.

Yet when the End does come, this integration will be something new. "Behold, I will do a new thing, saith the Lord" (Isa. 43.19). The Return from Exile is but an aspect of a greater truth, though this verse certainly refers to the Return. It is a

new heaven *and* a new earth together that God will create (Isa. 65.17, 66.22), where the redeemed will be called by a new name (Isa. 62.2). Together they will be new, as a whole is more than the mere sum of its parts. And this new creation will be of the very "spiritual flesh" of God Himself, the glory which is none other than the garment of the living God (Isa. 40.5, 66.18; Ps. 104.2-4).

CHRIST AND THE FORCES OF DESTRUCTION[1]

AND A WORD CONCERNING THE DE-MYTHOLOGISING OF CHRISTIANITY

by THE RIGHT REV. ANDERS NYGREN, BISHOP OF LUND

I

WHEN we encounter a discussion concerning Christ and the forces of destruction, our thoughts go immediately to Luther and to his explanation of the second article of the Apostle's Creed in his catechism: "I believe that Jesus Christ is my Lord, who has released, redeemed and won me from all sin, from death and the power of the devil." Sin, death and the devil—these are the powers, which have subjected human life to their control and lead it to destruction. But now Christ has come and redeemed me and the whole human family to which I belong. He has deprived these other masters of their power and Himself become "My Lord", so that I am no longer a slave unto *death*, but may *live* under His dominion: "So that I shall be His own, remain and live with Him in His Kingdom and serve Him." Or to express the same thing in the words of Luther's hymn:

> The slave of *satan* I did lay,
> Consigned to *death* forever;
> Haunted by *sin* both night and day
> . . . .
> Then God in heaven lamented,
> My misery enormous.
> His sternness He repented,
> To help me from my torments.
> . . .
> He spoke to His dear Son:
> 'Tis time for love supernal:
> Go down, though worthy of a throne,
> And heal his wound infernal.

[1] Translated from the Swedish by Professor E. Jerome Johanson, Riley Professor of Christian Theology, Hartford Seminary Foundation, Hartford, Conn., U.S.A. The Swedish article was published in *Svensk Teologisk Kvartalskrift Häfte I*, 1951, pp. 1-11.

Release him from *sin's* plight
Put bitter *death* to flight
And give him *life* eternal.[1]

Christ as our deliverer, Christ as the One who has conquered and put down the powers of destruction, Christ as our Lord, who gives us life and whom we may now serve in freedom—this is precisely what is central in the Gospel, as Luther understood it.

But why do we stop with Luther? It was not he who discovered the powers of destruction, nor Christ, who comes as our deliverer. This came to him as a message from the New Testament; and in the same manner it also comes to us from the New Testament, which is nothing other than the message concerning this great act of deliverance. The Gospel means, of course, "Good news". It signifies a joyful message to those who lie imprisoned, the message which says to them: Now the hour of release has struck! You are no longer prisoners! You are *free*—free through the victory Christ has won over the powers, which keep you in bondage.

We often use the name "Christianity", and we like to think that thereby is meant a view, a doctrine, a conception concerning God, the world, and mankind. That is the great danger in using the name "Christianity", that it favours such thoughts, as though the Christian faith were primarily a view or doctrine, an ideology among other ideologies. But we must never forget that Christianity is, above all, a Gospel, therefore, a message. And we must take seriously its character as a message.

In order to show what it signifies that the Gospel comes to us as a message, let me take an illustration which I have already used several times for the same purpose. It was last used in my book *The Gospel of God*. It is an illustration from our own time, and it almost seems created to bring clearness into this problem.

During the last world war, one country after another was occupied. Inasmuch as this fate also struck our nearest neighbouring countries, we have a fairly clear idea of what life is like in a country occupied by an enemy. Many of the citizens

[1] Another English translation of Luther's hymn, which was written, and quoted by Bishop Nygren, in German, will be found in the Hymnal of the Augustana Synod, published by the Lutheran Augustana Book Concern, Rock Island, Ill., 1901, hymn No. 280.

had to go underground because of fear of those in power; or else they would languish in prisons and concentration camps. And even those who did not directly and personally meet with the interference of the occupying authorities, experienced in many ways the fact that they did not live in a free country. The feeling of having lost one's legal rights and of living under compulsion weighs heavily upon the country.

But then one day there comes the *message*: "Your country is *free*. The occupying power is beaten and must abandon the field." What is now the significance of this message? First and foremost it signifies that an objective change has occurred. There is something which has happened and which the message reports: a power has come which is stronger than the occupying power, and deprived it of its dominion. But that which has occurred also has the most far-reaching consequences for every individual in the country. The whole life takes a new form. The period of the violation of justice and of arbitrariness has passed away. The law, which was unable to function, again returns to power. The change, which has come over the country as a whole, also affects the individual citizen. He can say: "The freedom of my country also signifies that I have personally received back my freedom."

Why have I cited again this illustration of the occupation? Because there is no better illustration for making clear the import of the Gospel as a joyful message. It can be said that this is not merely one illustration among others, but that it is *the* illustration, the important general illustration which has been given to the people of our time. We know and feel that the state of being occupied is a universal reality, the effects of which reach out into the uttermost ramifications of our lives; and we know and feel that the state which obtains with the lifting of the occupation is a contrasting reality, whose effect likewise reach out into the uttermost branches of our lives. The people of our generation need only to hear the word "occupation", they need only to hear about a country possessed by the forces of an enemy in order to understand immediately that it is a question of a sad and terrible condition, and they need only to hear one speak about release from such oppression in order to perceive at once what joy and life such a message signifies.

Now the message of the New Testament has the same significance—only with an infinitely wider outreach and an infinitely deeper effect upon our human life. Our human life is by nature a life lived under foreign powers, under the forces of destruction. Here the literal meaning of the Apostle is relevant: "The struggle we have to carry on is not a struggle against flesh and blood, but against powers and principalities and world rulers (*ἀρχάς, ἐξουσίας, κοσμοκράτορας*), which rule in the darkness" (Eph. 6.12). The New Testament comprehends the whole natural human life, the whole life of mankind turned away from God, in a comprehensive view expressed in the words "this world" (*κόσμος οὗτος*) or the "old aeon", "this age" (*ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος*). Of "this world" it is true, that it lies under the power of the evil one (1 John 5.19), that it stands under the dominion of the forces of destruction. And the forms of destruction—these are the powers which the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans designates under the four words: God's wrath, sin, the law and death.

In Rom. 1.18 Paul speaks of how *God's wrath* is revealed against all the godlessness of men. Behind the condition of the old aeon lies godlessness, the fact that mankind has turned away from God. When men in their selfishness and self-glorification will not remain in God's Kingdom, but refuse Him obedience, they think they are free. But that is merely an idle fancy. When men in sin turn away from God, they go, to be sure, where they themselves want to go; but they are, therefore, by no means free, but are bound in a double sense; bound to God and bound by sin. Mankind is bound to God, otherwise how could a person liberate himself from God? Men go where they themselves want to go, but at the same time they go where God sends them. And that means that they become bound by sin. For God abandons them to sin, delivers them to the power of sin, places them under sin as their overlord. "Therefore God gave them up" says Paul three times in Rom. 1. So much concerning God's wrath.

Mankind has, then, been placed by God's wrath under the dominion of *sin*. When sin is mentioned, we generally think about certain moral mistakes or about a reprobate character, which expresses itself in these wicked deeds. The Scriptures speak about sin in an altogether different manner: sin certainly

is man's own action and his own perverted mind, but it is at the same time a power which keeps him imprisoned and leads him to destruction. Sin is a destructive power, which exercises its tyranny not only over the individual person, but over the whole human race. When men sin, they do it gladly with the feeling that they have control over their action; another time they can decide in the opposite way and do what is right. But this consciousness of freedom which accompanies sin is nothing but an illusion. "He who sins, is a slave to sin." It is not mankind which is the master of sin, but it is sin which is the master of mankind. By nature we all stand under this terrible dominion. We live in an occupied country, and even if we imagine that we are free, we are still under an alien power.

God's wrath, sin, law, death—these are the terrible powers which have overcome human life; these are the forces of destruction, which control the old aeon. How they work together to enslave us Paul describes in Rom. 5 and 1 Cor. 15. In Rom. 5.12 we read: "As sin came into the world through *one* man and through sin death, so death has spread to all men. . . ." And in 1 Cor. 15.56: "The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law." The real ruler of the old aeon is death. Hence it is also called "the last enemy" (1 Cor. 15.26). But death has its sting, its weapon, its *κέντρον*, wherewith it drives mankind as a flock and keeps it under its dominion. But that which gives sin its power, that which makes sin a sharp and effective weapon, is the law (Rom. 5.20). So our whole human family stands under the fear of death and its reign of terror. Human life carries within itself its own dissolution. All of Adam's descendants are the heirs of death.

To us, who live in this country occupied by sin, the curse, the law and death, there now comes through the Gospel this message from God: The new aeon has broken through, your hour of release has struck. God through Christ has deprived the forces of destruction of their dominion and given our human family a new start. "When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace; but when one stronger than he assails him and overcomes him, he takes away his armour in which he trusted, and divides his spoil" (Luke 11.21 ff.). It was literally this which occurred through Christ. He came as the stronger one who overcame sin and death and

released their slaves. Now *He* is "our Lord", since He has deposed the old rulers. Through His death the power of sin and death were broken. Through His resurrection the new aeon, the resurrection aeon, began. Through Christ God has given our human family a new start. He has installed Christ as the *Head* of the new humanity. Christ's resurrection is the turning point in the history of our human family. It is the victory which means victory and freedom for us. In Eph. 1.19 ff. the Apostle speaks about the supreme act of God in our existence, about "the working of his great might which he accomplished in Christ when he raised him from the dead and made him sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come, and he has put all things under his feet and made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body. . . ." What happened to Christ was not something which only concerned Him individually; it holds good for the new humanity, which has Him as its head, and which takes His name when it is called "Christianity here upon the earth". He is the "first fruit", and what happened to Him affects everyone who through faith is united with Him.

The Gospel as the message of God's mighty deed through Christ for the overcoming of the power of sin and death and for the restoration of the Kingdom of righteousness and life, goes out into the world appealing to our faith. For to have faith—that is to belong to Christ and to have a share in the life, which has dawned in and through His resurrection. Just as the natural human life is a life "in Adam"—or one might just as well say a death "in Adam"—so is the life of the new aeon a life "in Christ", the true life, the resurrection life. "For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ" (1 Cor. 15.21 ff.).

This is the message of the Gospel in brief form: the condemnation which rests upon the whole human life has been removed through Christ. He who has faith in Him, and through faith belongs to Him, "has passed from death to life"

(John 5.24). Through Christ God has "delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the Kingdom of his beloved son" (Col. 1.13). Everything depends upon the connexion and unity with Christ. It is *for this reason* that we through faith are bound to Him, *for this reason* that we are baptised in His name—so that we shall be assimilated by Him, be united with Him (*σύμφυτοι*) through a corresponding death and a corresponding resurrection (Rom. 6.5). *Therefore*, He gives Himself to us in the Lord's Supper, so that we shall be one body with Him: "this is my body, which was broken for you."

The content of the Gospel is concentrated in this one fact, that "the time is fulfilled", that Christ, the Messiah, has come, that the Messianic age has begun, that the new aeon is already a reality, even though it will be made manifest openly and in glory only at Christ's return. Through Christ that which is really *new* has come. To John the Baptist's question: "Are you he who is to come?"—*ὁ ἐρχόμενος* = Messiah (Luke 7.20)—Jesus replies by referring to the fact that the sign of the Messianic age was already coming (cf. Luke 4.18-21: "To-day this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing"). Since the Kingdom has come through Him, His disciples are blessed, for "theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. 5.3, 10). They shall be present at the time of fulfilment for which the generations and centuries have longed: "Blessed are the eyes which see what you see! For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it" (Luke 10.23 ff.). Blessed is he who with Peter can confess: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16.16 ff.), and can honour Him as the Messiah with the acclamation, "Blessed is He who comes" (*ὁ ἐρχόμενος*). The basis of the blessedness of the disciples is that they may be present in the new Kingdom. The least in the new aeon are greater than the greatest in the old (Matt. 11.11; Luke 7.28). The band of disciples is indeed a "little flock", embedded in the old aeon with its determined resistance, but it does not need to fear for—says Jesus—"It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom" (Luke 12.32) —the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs, and thereby everything becomes new. "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old has passed away, behold the new has come" (2 Cor.

5.17). Through Christ the new creation has come, and he who is "in Christ" has a share in the new; he is himself a new κτίσις.

II

Everyone will be aware that in the presentation of the central Christian message, we have followed the New Testament itself, but that we have thereby been compelled to place in the foreground precisely those aspects of the Christian faith which appear most alien to the average person of our time. It is easy to take from the New Testament separate sentences, which can be accepted by the modern mind without difficulty. If one isolates these and removes all the rest which appears in the New Testament, one can certainly present an "up-to-date Christianity". Our task here, however, has been to present quite realistically the decisive features of the Christian message in their original form. We cannot then avoid seeing that the original meaning of the Gospel constitutes a great difficulty for the ordinary modern person. What the Gospel declares appears to him to be something fictitious. He considers them as mythological conceptions or legendary adornments of a reality, which becomes inconceivable just because of these adornments. What can the average person of to-day do when he hears someone talk about the two aeons? What can he do about the ideas of Adam and Christ, of the forces of destruction, of the dominion of sin and death over the natural human life, and of the Kingdom of righteousness and life through Christ? What use can he make of the cross of Christ and His vicarious suffering, of Christ's resurrection and supremacy? Must not all of this appear to him to be unreal, merely words which remain, despite the disappearance of the underlying conceptions from the non-mythological thought of the modern man?

Here appears the important question discussed these latter years concerning "the de-mythologising of the New Testament". It should be clear because of the exposition given above, that this is not a question of an artificially constructed problem, but of a real one. The Christian message, however, intends to be a message to modern men. But if it is not understood by them as a real message, but merely as an expression for a mythologically conceived world of earlier times, which cannot now

be used, then the message makes no headway, but falls short of its goal.

One cannot say that the discussion concerning "de-mythologising" has brought forth any real clarification. The cause is that in too great a measure men allow themselves to be bound to the alternative offered by a given starting point. Upon closer examination, however, it discloses itself to be a false alternative. *On the one hand*, men have required as thorough a de-mythologising as possible of the New Testament message. In so doing, one is certainly conscious of the risk that in the elimination of the mythology the Gospel itself may be eliminated; but men think they can avoid that risk through "an existential interpretation of mythological ideology", whereby a Christian understanding of the human situation (*Seinsverständnis*) and of the self (*Selbstverständnis*) is possible. *On the other hand*, it is maintained that such a de-mythologising necessarily leads to the dissolution of the message. "It is a question, whether we can ever avoid myth" (J. Schniewind). "Is mythology not a form of our thinking, from which we can never free ourselves?" (H. Thielicke).

The alternative is unfortunate and false. It creates the impression that the New Testament must be based upon myths and that the question for us should be, how much of the mythological we should be compelled or ought to retain, or whether we should make an interpretation which completely eliminates the mythological feature. The real starting point is another. The message of the New Testament—and just as we described it above in its most pointed form—has nothing to do with mythology. It is not we and our generation which has first discovered that there is a contrast between *myth* and *truth*, between *myth* and *reality*. The New Testament itself draws this distinction between the truth, ἡ ἀλήθεια, which it proclaims, and myths, οἱ μύθοι, which it rejects (2 Tim. 4.4). And in 2 Pet. 1.16 the reality of the Gospel is placed over against the cleverly devised myths: "We did not follow cleverly devised myths (σεσοφισμένοις μύθοις), when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty." For the New Testament it is of decisive significance, that its message is truth and reality, and not myth.

If, in spite of all this, the New Testament message appears to modern men as largely mythological, the cause is that we approach the New Testament with presuppositions other than its own, and thus misunderstand the message. If the Gospel appears to us as mythological, that is a proof that it has been falsely proclaimed or falsely understood. We must never be satisfied with a proclamation and exposition of the Gospel which represents it as something—which it is not—a myth. There must occur here a "de-mythologising" on a grand scale. It is R. Bultmann's merit that he has seen this problem and set it forth with emphasis. But it is his limitation that he has seen it altogether too much from the perspective of the enlightenment. His whole effort thereby readily gives the impression that it belongs to a manner of thinking long out of date. De-mythologising cannot, then, occur in the way which Bultmann supposes. It is not the New Testament which should be de-mythologised, but our modern view of Christianity, which makes the Christian message falsely appear mythological. What occurs when one attempts to de-mythologise the New Testament, is in reality that one transposes the truth and reality of the Gospel into a modern myth. In the Gospel it is not a question of understanding the human situation (*Seinsverständnis*) and the self (*Selbstverständnis*) and a redemptive process which makes that possible; it is a question of a wholly realistic salvation through an act of God in our real world. That which hinders us in conceiving it wholly realistically and in hearing the message as a message about a reality, which completely alters the conditions of our life, is certain modern ways of thinking, which have become so customary that they appear as self-evident. One could with reason designate them as the myths of our time. There are things which can be designated as "the myths of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries". The real "myth of the twentieth century" has, however, nothing to do with what Alfred Rosenberg designated by that name. "The myth of the twentieth century" is that which appears self-evident in our time, the self-evident presuppositions whereby this epoch lives. In and of themselves these presuppositions are not really necessary. Their necessity lies in their psychological force and in the relative inescapability caused thereby. Every period can see only with its own eyes; it has no others with

which to see. It does not know what its own self-evident presuppositions are. If it knew, they would not continue to be self-evident. But these self-evident presuppositions, these myths characteristic of the epoch are the things which limit the range of vision and cause much in the Gospel to be incomprehensible to us. What needs to occur is not that the Gospel be transposed through interpretation into our myths—that would only be to make of our limitation a yardstick whereby the Gospel should be appraised. Such an adjustment of the Gospel to the present general understanding occurs quite inevitably; but we must never forget that just this signifies a *limitation* in our understanding of the Gospel. Future generations will be astonished that we could live upon such a meagre spiritual fare—just as we are astonished at the spiritual dryness of the enlightenment, since its self-evident presuppositions have certainly ceased to be self-evident for us. They will be astonished that we, with our control over nature, have at the same time let ourselves be enslaved by it. They will be astonished at the primitiveness of our categories, which permit us to subsume under one and the same concept, the reality of the Gospel and myths. The demythologising which needs to occur should consist rather in the rejection of the doubtful presuppositions or—to put it frankly —the mythological elements in the usual modern conception, which makes the reality of the Gospel, quite contrary to its obvious meaning, appear mythological.

Such a de-mythologising of our contemporary thinking in order to attain unto the reality of the Gospel is, however, a matter of the greatest difficulty—just because we are all bound quite unconsciously and positively to the self-evident presuppositions of our time. Hence there are always barriers to our understanding of the Gospel. Only we should not create hermeneutic principles of these barriers. In certain fields it is quite possible to free ourselves from contemporary prejudices. We live at the present time in a period of spiritual readjustment, when many things, which quite recently seemed self-evident, have lost their self-evidence.

To cite but a single instance, we may mention *individualism.* For a long time the individualistic conception of man prevailed as an absolutely self-evident presupposition; but it is that no longer. In our present situation we have no interest in discuss-

ing the tenability or untenability of the collectivist or more organic conceptions which men seek to put in its place. The main thing is that the individualism in the conception of man no longer remains in sole possession of the field, no longer rules by right of self-evidence.

When a representative of the individualistic myth encounters Paul's word about Adam and Christ (Rom. 5), he must, consistently with his point of view, ask, "What kind of speculation is this? What kind of strange myth is this? To think that an individual at the beginning of the human race could act with consequences for all other individuals! Or that another individual in the midst of the generations could act with the opposite consequences for those who have faith in him! In agreement herewith have not men often spoken in theology about the Apostle's speculations concerning Adam and Christ?" That would be quite correct reasoning—if the presupposition of individualism was correct and inescapable. But now that is precisely what is subject to discussion. Our generation has experienced the fact that human life is bound together in a common fate. It can no longer maintain the illusion of the self-glorying, exclusively independent individual. It has had to experience the reality of "occupation". It has had to see that there are objective conditions, powers situated outside of us, which extend their effects into the outermost ramifications of our life and determine it.

When one has seen that, then he has escaped from the myth of individualism—and come into immediate proximity to the realities of the New Testament.

When the individualist encounters talk about sin, he can, according to his presuppositions, only see therein an individual taking a sovereign position. He cannot see that sin is a power which rules over its victims. When he encounters talk about death, he sees therein a definite event which sets a limit for the individual life; on the other hand, what he cannot see is how the fate of death rests upon the whole of human life, and sets its imprint upon it, and not merely upon its last moment.

It is the simple realities of human life about which the Gospel message speaks. There are things about which one must say: Is *is* so. Those who do not believe in God may call Him by other names, and give them another interpretation. But the

realities are there, since human life is such as it is. A one-sided modern myth has stopped at the surface of human life. The New Testament also knows about its deep dimension and its realities. Christian proclamation only discharges its obligation when it pushes through to these realities. It is to overestimate modern man's inability to see spiritual realities, if one means that he could not understand anything else than a Gospel refashioned according to his own myths. If all the signs do not fail, we have already passed the low point in the problem of spiritual understanding. Much indicates that we are approaching a period which will find it easier to make contact with the Gospel than the immediately preceding period—not in the form of an ecclesiastical awakening, but rather in a general openness to the Gospel message. Perhaps one notices at the present time less of this in Sweden, where one should rather talk about a certain spiritual laggardness—quite naturally since we have for the most part lived at the side of the great historic events which have shaken our world. There is little reason for adjusting the Gospel to views, which appeared self-evident yesterday, but to-day have lost that self-evidence. If preaching clearly points to the realities, with which the Gospel is concerned, then it will also show itself in our age as a power of God unto salvation. The world in which we live is the world of sin and death. But it is also the world into which God sent Him who "has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel", and we have been appointed as its preachers (2 Tim. 1.10 ff.).

GOD'S HEAVENLY KINGDOM AND HIS SERVANTS THE ANGELS

An Account of *Kirchliche Dogmatik* III/3 §51 by Karl Barth

by The Rev. W. A. WHITEHOUSE

Modern exponents of the doctrine of creation skate as lightly as possible over the thesis that God is Maker of *heaven* as well as of earth. And St. Matthew's habit of referring to the Kingdom of Heaven does not commend itself as important to most scholars in their elucidation of the Kingdom of God. For Barth, whose doctrine of Providence was outlined in the last issue of this *Journal*, "God's Kingdom which comes to us on earth is the Kingdom of Heaven; and when God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven, that is not only a *divine* event, i.e. one established, governed, and consummated by God, but also a *heavenly* event, i.e. one worked out in the presence, power, co-operation, and co-revelation of heaven on earth" (p. 558). Though this is a secondary aspect of the event, a theology which ignores it is gravely impoverished. And a proper recognition of this aspect entails a further recognition that man's encounter with God in His saving act is also an encounter with the angels of God, the creatures who inhabit heaven. Schleiermacher wrote a notable appendix *Of the Angels* (§§42-43 in the Second Edition of *The Christian Faith*) which dismissed the topic from Protestant theology for 150 years, but now it has come back in a treatise which will surely rank with the other two great monuments of angelology, the *Celestial Hierarchy* of Pseudo-Dionysius, and the *Summa Theologica* of Aquinas (I.50-64, 106-114), both of which are sympathetically evaluated.

Is this a field of knowledge of which Christian theology must take serious account, and if so, with what methods and safeguards? It is clear that the notions of heaven and of angels form part of the framework within which the Christian Gospel is proclaimed and believed, and that the Biblical writers have something to say about the heavenly angelic function which has for them a necessary connexion with their primary theme.

It is equally clear that this has for a long time been regarded as a case for *Entmythologisierung* by those parts of the Church which are not committed to the theology either of John of Damascus or of Thomas Aquinas. Once Dionysius could be branded Pseudo, his theme was relegated to the hands of poets and children. Biblical angelology became a minor theme of study for those concerned to elucidate the mental climate of some Biblical writers. And occasionally a philosophical theologian has proposed an explanation of the patristic or medieval interest in angels to show that some "equivalent concept" would still be of use to us to-day. For my own part, I have been uneasy about treating this theme as dispensable or superficial to the essential Christian Gospel, but at the same time utterly unconvinced by the various kinds of treatment it has received. I now think that Barth is right when he says that a theology which has no account of angels, or a non-Christian account, is an impoverished theology; for the problem of angelology is "the problem of the *mystery* of the presence, the speech and action of God, in our neighbourhood, i.e. in the lower cosmos —the problem of heaven and earth, which is the problem of the significant nearness *and* distance, distance *and* nearness, without which God would not meet the earthly creature as majestic and trustworthy, holy and gracious, and therefore not as God" (p. 605). The story of God's action, incorporating us into His Kingdom by the Holy Spirit, is not fully told until the secondary emphasis is brought out that this Kingdom is the Kingdom of Heaven; and that creatures belonging intrinsically to the Kingdom of Heaven exist in the service of that Kingdom, and their service is precisely to accompany the extension of that Kingdom to earth and effect its purposes, not by any power of their own (it is the mark of demons to claim such power), but because the effective glory of God is reflected in them as the glory of a king is reflected in the ideal ambassador. Such a doctrine of angels, which is significantly different from anything formulated before and wholly Biblical, fills a gap in our account of God's dealings with men which, in default of it, may be filled by exaggerated accounts of Scripture or of Bishops to the undoing of the Church's integrity.

Barth realises that this is a field where extreme care is needed if our assent to the Biblical testimony is to develop into

understanding, and he works out the "limits of angelology" in a long section which includes a review of all that has happened in the past. Biblical history, he points out, is always on the verge of "saga", and the theme of angels is always introduced on the very edge where what is proclaimed passes over into the mysterious or non-verifiable region of events. Therefore we have only "poetic indications", savouring of divination or fantasy. But in the Bible they come under the control of that real event, God's grace in Jesus Christ, which also governs the empirical history. This makes them orderly, meaningful, and disciplined, and therefore one can and must think through them, albeit incidentally and with a light touch. But this theological task was distorted almost from the outset, by the desire to answer a question which from the Bible alone is unanswerable. What are angels by "nature"? *Ex eo quod est, spiritus est. Ex eo quod agit, angelus est.* By this remark Augustine confirmed the tendency to build up a background for the Biblical angels, which in time became so interesting as to obscure the sole Biblical interest which is their office. To call them "spirits", as in Heb. 1.14, was originally to confess ignorance about their nature, but it came to suggest that they should be taken generically with the souls of men, and a story was built up on this assumption about the independent mode of existence which may properly be attributed to "intelligent spirits". Rev. 4-5 added force to the adjectives in Heb. 1.14, and the Biblical evidence was sometimes used to suggest that the essential function of angels is to participate in the heavenly cultus which establishes the whole rhythm of creation. But this must not be pressed too hard against the Fathers, for Dionysius, whose great merit was to reduce patristic angelology to some order, felt himself under no obligation to turn an *angelus* into a being whose characteristic function is to sing hymns. To his neo-Platonic mind the angels appear as hypostasised moments in the heavenly motion, the cascade of light which brings knowledge and redemption to men. But at least his account of them was fundamentally "functional", dynamic, and soteriological, whereas in Thomas the counter-tendency comes to full expression, and they become elements in a stable heavenly system, whose "mission" brings them out of their proper sphere. Barth's question is whether this ontology of angels, which has taken

the Church so very far away from the Biblical witness, is necessary to systematic thought. He finds that Protestant theologians who have recognised its alien character have still complained that the Biblical symbols are so obscure that even though they must still control the final story they require to be interpreted in the light of non-Biblical principles. Against all this he insists that there is positive illumination for us in the Biblical silence about the "nature" of angels, and that if we concentrate on the Biblical presentation, and keep our thinking true to its suggestion that they are relative to the God-man relationship and properly knowable *in their office*, we can do full justice to the claim that they are so bound up with the Word of God that any response of faith which ignores them is inadequate. The fundamental weakness of "the Intellectualism of St. Thomas" comes to light very clearly (p. 464 f.) in the theology which earned for him the title of the Angelic Doctor. That theology is the grandest expression of the attempt to produce an antology of heaven and of angels. Such theology is ill-conceived, but nevertheless Thomas and Dionysius are masters who press upon us the truth of a heavenly part in the created cosmos, whose participation in the history of God's covenant with mankind is an indispensable theme of theology.

Can one, however, work out the theology of the matter if ontological questions cannot be raised in this field? Barth reminds us that the question of heaven is raised by the Biblical witness to God's action, for the sake of which action He has created the cosmos. Though He is apart from His creation and "the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him" (nor yet His Son—Eph. 4.10), He has His throne within the cosmos, in the region of heaven which is the *terminus a quo* for His action here. The action itself is one to which we have become subject. Its central moment is the *coming to earth* of the Word of God in the fashion of *a heavenly man*. We acknowledge it as the coming of the Kingdom of God from heaven to earth, and we cannot evade the intellectual consequences of conceiving the focus of all God's action to be the history of man on this planet. The exegesis of the Biblical witness to this history in which God and man participate must clarify first of all the meaning of "heaven", and no *raison d'être* is ever suggested for heaven or for its inherent created life apart from this action of God the covenanting King.

His will is done in heaven *in order that* it may be done on earth. In the witness to His action, we note a concomitant witness to the action of a heavenly host. The army of Israel, as well as the stars in their courses, are often taken to be tokens on earth of properly heavenly creatures, to whose action their own is related. It becomes clear that within the fundamental theme of God's action, the heavenly host must have within itself ordered variety, multiplicity, and diversity of office, for only so can we acknowledge the detailed particularity with which the Kingdom of Heaven bears down upon earth.

At this point one needs to examine at length the Biblical material in order to deal with the suggestions of a hierarchy of angels, and of named angels with identifiable functions. Barth finds no basis whatever for the suggestion of hierarchical ordering. He interprets Paul's terminology against the background of Daniel where the heavenly creatures are called *sarim* to express their function of imposing upon earth the peace of God; and this activity of the heavenly *sarim* is brokenly reflected, to Paul's mind, in the action of various political ordinances on the human scene. In a long and powerful exposition of Rev. 4-5, Barth makes the point that in every angel God is "represented" in His relation to a particular realm of earthly reality. And it is significant that the immediate guardians of the throne are precisely the "four beasts" which on any showing are the angels most intimately associated with God's movement towards earth, and it is they who initiate the praise of heaven. This in turn helps to clarify the truth in the notion of a "heavenly cultus". To the angels must be attributed perfect knowledge of the whole "mystery of God". Their entire existence is an "exemplary service" to that mystery, not only in their office of accompanying its fulfilment, but also in the antecedent praise which they give because what God has determined in heaven must happen on earth. Thus the angels are the creatures made to inhabit heaven, the region of God's throne in the cosmos, from which His Kingdom is being extended to earth. They exist in the service of this extended Kingdom, which is the service of God and His earthly creatures. That is the definition which we should work with, and it is an exclusive definition for the purposes of Christian theology.

What then can be said of angels on the basis of this defini-

tion? I have space only for a bare list of observations. God's action is mediated to His creatures by His creatures. But, unlike the humblest earthly thing, an angel cannot belong to itself as well as to God. It has no "substance" of the kind sought by ontology, and it is lost to human view in God. (This explains why "to be as the angels in heaven" solves the problems of marriage without annulling marriage.) They are plenipotentiaries because their testimony to God's action is unadulterated testimony. Ambassadors, remember, are not members of the government they represent, but their presence demands the respect appropriate to the government. It is the ministry of angels which alone makes manifest the "Otherness" from which God comes to us. Omit the angels, and you create havoc by ascribing their office either to the Holy Spirit or to Bishops. Their service is to give to God's relation with men its cosmic contours and concreteness.

We must remember, however, that though their authority is something which neither prophet nor apostle can have (though it is precisely the authority claimed by the Pope), theirs is not the most privileged role in creation. As Barth points out, in using the illustration of an ambassador, a business man has greater freedom than an ambassador ever enjoys. And here it is instructive to examine the places where they are introduced into the Gospel story. They come only at the beginning and the end, to mark off the history within which lies all history, but which is itself wrought out by the man Jesus. Before and after that history, it is for human witnesses to take up the tale.

I do not claim to have understood all that Barth has written in this chapter. Nor do I think that the issues he is pressing will come home to us simply by our having available a translation of his work. We must have a book from a British theologian on the subject. But I am persuaded that the God of whom the Bible speaks must be represented to us, when He confronts us, by creatures whose office is clearly indicated in Scripture along the lines which Barth has worked out so magnificently. It is clear to me, though not, perhaps, to the reader of this bald sketch, that here is a clarification in the field of theology which is much nearer to the heart of the Church's *malaise* than one would ever imagine. What has been misrepresented

in the "catholic" tradition, and *entmythologisiert* in the "protestant" tradition is something vital to our apprehension of the Gospel.

I follow Barth's example in respect of demons. He dismisses them in 15 pages, for "a short sharp glance at the waste places is all they should have". They are not bad angels, but opponents of the angels. You don't believe in them for they are the Lie basic to all lies; *der in alle Mythen spukende Mythus*. They represent the dynamism of Chaos, whose reality consists in God's conflict with it. Not created, they are there by the divine No! But they triumph over the angelic ministrations wherever men are persuaded to deny their reality. To deviate from this paradoxical line, and to work out in the name of Biblical realism a demonology alongside angelology, eschatology, soteriology and Christology, is to commit the fundamental mistake which led to the witch-hunts whose major effect was to provoke the Enlightenment. I think that awkward questions remain which cannot be silenced by this line of argument, but fundamentally I believe it is right.

KINGDOM OF GOD AND CHURCH[1]

by The Rev. Professor K. E. SKYDSGAARD

In our time the *Church* appears constantly as a subject of theological reflection alike in the Evangelical and the Catholic world. Indeed hardly any other question has occupied the minds of theologians so much. At the turn of the century it was still possible to deliver a course of lectures on "the Nature of Christianity" without entering into serious discussion of the Church at all, for it was not considered a real problem. It is different to-day. Robert Grosche says in the *Pilgernde Kirche* (1938, p. 23): "The religious problem of Christianity to-day lies in the nature and reality of the Church. . . . He who inquires about Christianity inquires about the Church."

Strangely enough this applies not only to the Protestant Church but to the Roman Catholic Church as well. It might be thought that this question, as far as Roman Catholicism is concerned, had been decided once and for all through the *Council of Trent*, and particularly through the *Vatican Council*, so that now Roman Catholics have only to follow their marching orders. But that is not the case. In our own time a very important change in the conception of the Church is taking place in the Roman Catholic Church. This expresses itself in a tension between two different views of the Church. One is conditioned by an anti-Protestant bias, and is legalist and institutional in its fundamental direction; the other represents the apostolic and early Christian idea of the Church as the Body of Christ, the *corpus Christi mysticum*.

In Germany Johan Adam Möhler and Matthias Scheeben have chiefly prepared the way for this new conception in their theological writings, and it is well known that the theology of the Latin countries is also engaged with this idea. I need only mention the work of the Jesuit Mersch, *Le corps mystique du Christ—Études de théologie historique*, in two volumes; further, the first volume of Charles Journet's tremendous book on the Church,

[1] *Reich Gottes und Kirche, Schriftenreihe der Bekennende Kirche*, Heft 6, translated by Rev. B. Citron, Ph.D.

L'église du Verbe incarné; and the ecumenical study *Chrétiens désunis —Principes d'un oecuménisme catholique* by the Dominican Congar. We must also mention the Encyclical of 1943 by Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis Christi* ("On the mystical Body of Christ and our union with Christ therein"), in which the Pope develops the points which are fundamental for the "Constitution of the Church of Christ". These had already been prepared by the *Vatican Council* but owing to the hurried ending of that Council could not be carried through then.

The course of development in the Protestant Church is even clearer. To-day we are emerging from centuries of a theological tradition which had no idea what to do with the word *Church*. So-called neo-Protestantism disintegrated the conception altogether and thus removed the whole of theology and even the Christian life outwith the context of the Church. It could hardly have been otherwise when the individual was so much to the fore. This individualistic, un-ecclesiastical, and to a great extent even un-confessional form of Protestantism has now penetrated deeply into all classes of the people. It is thus against the evil fruits of a seed sown a couple of centuries ago that contemporary theology has to do battle.

I shall not go into the reasons why the question of the Church has been pursued in Evangelical Christendom with an urgency that has not been equalled since the Reformation. The Reformers themselves knew precisely what was at stake when they spoke about the *Church*. They knew that the Church was closely bound up with the Holy Gospel of God's glory and grace. The Reformers repeated literally Cyprian's words: "He can no longer have God for his Father, who has not the Church for his mother." It is for that very reason that the question as to the Church is so necessary. I cannot do better than cite the famous passage about the Church from Calvin's *Institutes*: "Let us learn from her single title of Mother, how useful, nay, how necessary the knowledge of her is, since there is no other means of entering into life unless she conceive us in the womb and give us birth, unless she nourish us at her breasts, and, in short, keep us under her charge and government, until, divested of mortal flesh, we become like the angels. For our weakness does not permit us to leave the school until we have spent our whole lives as scholars. Moreover, beyond the bosom of the Church

no forgiveness of sins, no salvation, can be hoped for" (4.1.4).

To-day the question as to the Church is posed with an urgency as great as then. It is raised in the Biblical exegesis as well as in systematic theology, not merely as a theological problem but as the vital question of the Evangelical Church, one which concerns her very existence. Moreover, I would say that to-day the world asks the Church about the Church. Theology should be conscious of this fact and be prepared for it. We shall now try to consider the theological aspect of the problem. In this respect it is important at the outset to realise how New Testament exegesis and systematic theology are working hand in hand. It is in fact typical of the trend of present-day theology that such fruitful co-operation has taken the place of the former division between historical and systematic theology, and that this co-operation has never proved more fruitful than in the question of the Church.

I shall not deal with the whole exegetical research into the concept of *ecclesia* in the New Testament, far less the vast literature in which this problem is treated. As far as the difference between Protestant research fifty years ago and modern research is concerned, it may be sufficient to refer to the essay of the Swedish scholar Olof Linton, *Das Problem der Urkirche in der neueren Forschung—Eine kritische Darstellung* (in the Annual Report of the University of Uppsala, 1932), and to the work by the Dominican Braun, in Fribourg, *Neues Licht auf die Kirche—die protestantische Kirchendogmatik in ihrer neuesten Entfaltung*, which gives a fair and thorough exposition of the idea of the Church from the liberal *consensus* of about 1880 to the new *consensus* of to-day, where the reader will gain a clear picture of the development that has taken place in the course of these years.

This close co-operation between exegetical research and systematic theology is most clearly shown in the problem *Kingdom of God and Church*. I do not intend to give a full exposition of the relationship between these two terms, but starting from them, we will try to advance a further step in the understanding of the nature of the Church. In my view both conceptions belong closely together, so that it is hardly possible to reach a clear understanding of the nature of the Church without relating it to the basic New Testament conception of the Kingdom of God.

We may express the matter thus, in a brief preliminary

statement: The Kingdom of God is the conception placed above that of the Church; the Church is not the Kingdom of God, but the Church owes her existence to the Kingdom of God. She exists for the sake of the Kingdom; she represents the Kingdom of God on earth in the present age till through the coming of Christ in power God will grant full and final victory. In the Kingdom of God the Church has her ultimate frontier; from the Kingdom she receives all her substance, her power and hope. In the age of the Church everything is characterised by the sign *till He come* and stands constantly under the unfulfilled *not yet*, under the *Quousque Domine?*, which Calvin put as the motto of one of the editions of the *Institutes*. At the same time, however, the Church *is* here and now *till He come*, the reality of the Kingdom of God here on earth, the Body of Christ of which He is the Head.

This is the thesis which I shall now try to develop. In order to grasp the New Testament conception of the Kingdom of God we must first of all understand the meaning of the word *eschatology*.

In the last thirty years of the nineteenth century the Ritschlian theology was dominant which, as is well known, was basically un-eschatological. In terms of the Kantian philosophy the Kingdom of God was conceived as a Kingdom of hither-worldly love and with a hither-worldly purpose involving a religious attitude which stressed the will, ethics, and the development of personality. An immanent and spiritualistic conception of the Kingdom of God prevailed, which corresponded well with the optimistic view of man and of our world so typical of that period. Christianity was turned into a glorified *Kulturprotestantismus*, in many ways essentially a bourgeois phenomenon, which suited well the religious ideology of humanism.

A radical change of view took place as soon as New Testament scholars by conscientious exegesis discovered that the Ritschlian outlook showed no agreement whatsoever with the view of the New Testament. This revolution was brought about by Johannes Weiss in his book *Die Bergpredigt Jesu vom Reich Gottes* (1900). This school of religio-historical studies, which marked a complete change in the field of research and its ethical implications, produced an exclusively eschatological conception of the person of Jesus and of the Kingdom of God. While

New Testament scholars became thoroughgoing eschatologists, the dogmaticians remained, strangely enough, Ritschlians.

Higher criticism now came to the rescue. The eschatological element in the New Testament was looked upon as late Jewish apocalyptic which was conditioned by its time and was only the shell holding the eternal truth, but now with the help of higher criticism that truth could be extracted by dogmatic theology. As Karl Barth expressed it, eschatology was reduced to "a harmless little chapter at the end of dogmatics". We find this entirely un-eschatological view clearly expressed in the writings of Troeltsch: "The world to come can mean nothing but a gradual emerging of the issues which are matured in the higher life, and an ever deeper growing into the divine spiritual kingdom. A modern theologian has said, 'The eschatological office nowadays is mostly shut. It is shut because the ideas which formed its basis have lost their roots' " (*Glaubenslehre*, p. 30).

That was still the predominant position in theology several years after the advent of the twentieth century. Another revolution took place with the incursion of eschatology into systematic theology. In the theology of Karl Barth the change was mighty and radical. He was one of the great pioneers, though not the only one, who prepared the way. With God Himself once again at the centre of theology, eschatology advanced into the centre of systematic theology. Hans Emil Weber says in an article (*The Church in the Light of Eschatology*): "History has become a clamour for the eschatological Gospel."

I do not wish to enter further into the consequences of this revolution, but it can be said that it was God Himself who through this age and its terrible revelation of humanist deception has called His Church and the theology of His Church back to Himself. Once more the New Testament has been brought very near to us, so that it is no longer, as it was a generation ago, something one would rather pass by. Now it stands before us again, inescapable and essential, in which there encounters us the Gospel of the Kingdom in the most powerful and authentic way. Formerly systematic theology had to chop and change, but now eschatology, once an insurmountable barrier, has become the very centre of theology. In his book, mentioned above, Linton has shown very well the importance of this fact for the doctrine of the Church, but that is charac-

teristic of nearly all the literature in this field which has appeared in recent years.

I am not going to deal here with the course which eschatology took in its development through an existential philosophical view. Karl Barth has expressed this in almost classical terms in the second edition of his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*: "Christianity which is not wholly and completely eschatological has nothing to do with Christ." Eschatology here is still the actual breaking in of eternity straight from above, at every moment, which sovereignly cancels time. Time and eternity are opposed to each other as two irreconcilable contradictions, where history plays no part. It is well known that Karl Barth has gradually passed from this mainly philosophical antithesis to an eschatology which has its roots in Biblical theology and its direction in the end of history. This view is clearly expressed in Barth's *Church Dogmatics*, and also in the writings of Oscar Cullmann, especially in the pamphlet *Königsherrschaft Christi und Kirche* (1941), and in his book *Christus und die Zeit* (1946). I might also mention Heinz Dietrich Wendland's *Geschichtsauffassung und Geschichtsbewusstsein im Neuen Testament* (1938), and his *Die Eschatologie des Reiches bei Jesus* (1931).

In the Biblical perspective history plays a definite part. The Kingdom of God is history; it is God's history in the midst of the history of mankind. It is history not apart from or above human history, but woven into the history of this world, though clearly distinguished from it. In the Christian conception of history God Himself through the history of the Kingdom gives meaning and purpose to world history. God brings history to its end and cancellation, and leads it towards a new stage and a new world, where His creatures no longer suffer from the consequences of the Fall, and where His Will is the only Law. God wars at the same time for and against His creatures, in order to achieve His end. The Bible is not a timeless book of mystical meditations, which shows man a way out of the lower world into a higher, immutable world of ideas, in the Platonic sense, but it is the testimony of the history of the Kingdom of God. From beginning to end the Bible gives us a place in history. Nowhere can we learn the meaning of history better than in the description of the history of Israel. The Biblical conception of history presupposes the deep gulf between God

and the Prince of this world. God claims dominion over His creatures, but this absolute rule of the Will of God is opposed by the resistance of hostile powers, the compact mass of sin, which in titanic defiance revolts against God and His plans. History is the arena of this struggle, the ultimate issue of which is beyond doubt, for it must end with God's victory.

For the Christian conception of history this struggle between God and Satan, between Christ and Antichrist, is the real theme of world history. We must look at Christianity in this Biblical, dynamic perspective of the Kingdom of God which stretches from the beginning to the last day. The perspective of the Kingdom of God is the historical-prophetic-eschatological perspective, the fighting perspective, as it were.

In contrast to this perspective of the Kingdom stands the static perspective of organised religion in which the salvation and piety of the individual become the main thing. This represents a constant danger and temptation for the perspective of the Kingdom. This conception is found not only in many other religions, but very largely within Christendom itself. The perspective of the Kingdom is historical. It does not conceive God and the world as two fixed and metaphysically isolated magnitudes, but maintains that God has entered into this world and its history, and acts therein and aims at a certain goal. This goal is the conquest and destruction of the driving forces of this world and its history, the establishing of the sovereignty of His Will, the liberation of His creatures and the perfecting of the work of His creation. The perspective of the Kingdom is universal. It is concerned in the first instance not with the salvation of the individual but with the carrying through of the business of the Kingdom.

At the centre of the history of the Kingdom of God stands Jesus Christ. Before His incarnation, the history of the Kingdom was enacted within Israel's national history, which steered towards Him and which was full of the expectation of His coming. Since His crucifixion, the history of the Kingdom has taken place within the Church, which lives in the expectation of His Second Coming. Therefore, what the Church is, what she should be and what we ought to see in her, can only be understood from this perspective of the Kingdom.

The Kingdom of God is God's Lordship in action, while the

point of its complete break through into this world is Jesus Christ. Jesus is, as Origen expressed it, *autobasileia*. He is the personified Kingdom of God, because He is both God and Man. In the words and action of Jesus God's Lordship is at work. His words were not only words about the Kingdom of God, but already in them the Kingdom was present in its fulness. In Jesus the eschatological Kingdom of God was a perfect and ever present reality. Rudolf Otto expressed it thus: "The Kingdom of God has already dawned as the realm of redemption and as power." That is in keeping both with the words and works of Jesus, and applies especially to His death, resurrection, and ascension. In the eschatological sense these events belong to the history of the Kingdom of God. The victorious God who ultimately will conquer all His enemies has already invaded this earth, the new aeon has penetrated into the old one, and the age to come has begun with the present age.

Incredible and paradoxical, as it might appear, it has nevertheless proved true that by the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ, the world to come (*ὁ αἰὼν μέλλων*) is become a living reality within this present world. The Prince of this world is already vanquished, though God's victory will be proclaimed openly only when Christ comes again. But Jesus Christ and the events of His life, which are already in active operation, constitute the end of time. Accordingly, everything in this world is changed since the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The new aeon is planted in the old. The old aeon continues as if nothing had happened, though in its essence it is already vanquished. From the death of Jesus Christ light is shed upon all history, both upon the dark powers of history which stood behind the Cross in hostility to God, and upon God's victory over those powers.

Christ is the divisive point of history. All history before Christ was a history of expectation. That was of special significance for the *Heilsgeschichte* of Israel. God had a special purpose for Israel which was different from His intentions for other nations, and yet what happened to Israel was done for the sake of other nations as well. Too often in the past Israel misunderstood her own election, as if it were her peculiar privilege in preference to and in opposition to other nations. Israel was chosen not for her own sake, but for the sake of the whole

world. Since Christ God's *Heilsgeschichte* is no longer confined to Israel, for from that time onward the history of the Kingdom of God has become the history of Missions. It is addressed to all and witnessed by all in the full realisation of the Kingdom of God, and inasmuch as it is based on what happened in Christ it embraces all nations. And so Jesus said: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations." As the Lord of history Christ lays claim upon all ages, nations, races, and civilisations.

It was through Christ the Word, that God made the earth. In Christ He redeemed the earth, and in Christ God will at last lead His whole creation back to Himself. The road from creation to the end, when everything in heaven and on earth will be brought under the Will of God, leads through Christ. That is expressed in the great though difficult passage from the first chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, in which Paul speaks of the mystery of the Will of God which has been made known "that he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth" (*ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ, τὰ ἐπὶ τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς*).

That brings us to the point where we can discern in outline what the Church is. Loisy's words are well known: *Jésus annonçait le royaume de Dieu, mais c'est l'Église qui est venue.* Those words express Loisy's scepticism, but rightly understood they contain a grain of truth. Loisy meant that the Church had come instead of the Kingdom, but in the perspective which we have tried to outline, it means that there will be a Church till He comes.

The Church has her definite place in the scheme of the Kingdom of God between the Ascension and the Second Advent of Christ. There is a place for her in God's economy. The conception of time in the New Testament is not circular as in the Stoic-Platonic philosophy in which history presents the constant rhythmical re-enactment of that which has happened innumerable times before. Time in the New Testament is seen as a line that has a beginning and an end. History is real, and in this reality lies its significance. The history of the Kingdom of God takes place in the time of this world. It is to be found in Jahweh's struggle with His own people, the *qehal Jahwe*, and the *jear jashub*, and at last it gathers itself up in one single

person, in Christ. The Church is the reality of the ever-present *Kyrios*. The reality of the Church is the reality of the risen Christ in the midst of a fallen world, says Walter Künneth in his book *Theologie der Auferstehung*. The Church is the reality of the Spirit. That is to say, the Church begins with the miracle of Pentecost, when the Spirit, who is the Element of the new world and of the age to come, intervenes in the old world with its *sacro egoismo* and breaks into its sinfulness, though without destroying the outward form of this old world. What is the Sermon on the Mount but the law of the new earth, suddenly established in the midst of the old earth, unprotected and even "unfounded", the fire of God cast upon the earth, an attack upon the bourgeois ethics of this world, in its secular and religious forms.

The new pneumatic age of the resurrection is already present within the existing age—but it is still hidden. This concealment causes an eschatological tension which can be relieved only through the *Parousia*. The present time of the Church lies between the perfect tense of the resurrection and the future tense of ultimate fulfilment. We can now formulate the concrete question: What is the relation between this *ecclesia* and the Kingdom of God? And the answer must be a double one. On the one hand, the Kingdom of God is the Church's frontier of judgment; on the other hand, it is the whole substance of the Church.

First of all then, the Church is not the Kingdom of God. The Church has a double nature in that she already participates in the new age of the Kingdom in which God acts and works and speaks, and yet at the same time she still lives on earth and in the old aeon. She is the multitude, the assembly, of those who have already passed over into the Kingdom of the Son, who are already participants in the new reality of salvation, and yet who, on the other hand, are and remain children of this world, subject to the law of this earth, constantly exposed to the assaults of "the ancient Prince of hell", deeply marked within by sin and death. That is the essence of Luther's *simul justus et peccator*.

The Church is not *in patria* but *in via*. She is the *ecclesia viatorum*, always exposed to the temptation of Antichrist to apostasy and emancipation. The moment the Church forgets

that, when she establishes herself as the highest religious authority in the world, she ceases to be the Church of Jesus Christ and becomes renegade. Dostoievski has given an unequalled description of this truth in his *Grand Inquisitor* (in the *Brothers Karamasov*), and that does not merely apply to the Church of Rome, but to every Church.

The whole complex problem of the Church lies in her double character as at once the *ecclesia* of God and at the same time the Church of human beings on earth. This explains the tension between the visible and the invisible Church, between the essentially real Church and the empirical Church, between the Church of Esau and the Church of Jacob. Therefore it is always true to say of the Church: *ecclesia semper reformanda*. We confess our faith in One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church because we cannot simply identify the visible empirical Church with the invisible true Church. The truly Evangelical conception of the Church must therefore always be dialectical. That does not mean that the invisible Church could exist without the visible Church, but it does mean that we can never say that one equals the other.

The Kingdom of God is the critical frontier which ever prevents the Church from becoming a sort of pious world; it is the summons within the Church to constant battle against the Church and yet for the Church. Inasmuch as the Kingdom of God constantly calls the Church to order, the fire of the Kingdom will ever consume the Church through and through. Any attempt to establish the Kingdom of God here on earth leads to false enthusiasm and is a sign of sectarianism. Those who attempt it, want to abolish the two-fold character of the Church and thus avoid any possible cause of offence. The other mistake is to identify directly the earthly and empirical Church with the Kingdom of God, but that is to reduce the *ecclesia* to the level of a synagogue, even if it is most loyally confessional and altogether bound to the sacraments. Here lies the danger of "High-Churchism" both in its Roman and in its Protestant garb. The Church is never *the Ultimate End* (*to eschaton*), but is always orientated toward *the Ultimate End*, the Kingdom of God itself.

In her doubleness and ambiguity the Church is always pointing to the coming of the Kingdom of God, where alone

this doubleness will be done away. No one who through baptism is incorporated into the Body of Christ possesses the gifts of the Kingdom otherwise than in painful longing for the moment when all imperfection will cease. One day the age of the Church will pass away and what is now hid will be revealed in glory. According to St. Augustine, even the greatest treasure of the Church, the Gospel of God's forgiving Grace and the daily petition of the Church, "Forgive us our debts", is but the strongest expression of the eschatological ordering of the Church, her looking forward to the time when the power of sin is altogether broken and Paul's words in Eph. 5.27 are fulfilled: "That he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Augustine also interpreted those words of Paul eschatologically. The Kingdom of God therefore must ever be the critical frontier of the Church.

But that is not all. The Kingdom of God is also the divine substance or content of the Church, her innermost being. After all, the Kingdom of God is Christ Himself, and Christ is the Head of the Church on earth, and she is His Body.

The Church is an eschatological magnitude not only in the sense that her time will come to an end, but also in this sense that she is the place on earth where the Kingdom is constantly breaking in as renewed, ever-present reality. She is always *in via*, on the road towards the Kingdom, but she is at the same time the localisation of the Kingdom. Perhaps it is not quite correct to describe the Church as a place. The Church is something that happens, she is a reality *ἐν δυνάμει*, where the new divine Reality ever comes. The Church marks the boundary-line between the two aeons. She belongs to this world and its time, and yet she is not of this world and cannot be understood in terms of this world. She is the point at which there is a "break-through", where the old world is continually being conquered afresh by the new, hidden indeed from outward eyes, but visible to faith. It is a misunderstanding therefore to compare the Church to an economic or even religious organisation. Flight from the world and worldliness are both alien to the Church.

Further: The Church is a sacramental magnitude. That is to say, in those outward, visible signs, which constitute the

Church, the new Reality of Christ is actually and really present *hic et nunc*. The sacramental is on a same level with the Incarnation. The Incarnation means that we actually and really encounter God in the Man Jesus. His Humanity implies His Divinity.

It is when we speak of the Church as a sacramental magnitude that we get our answer to the question: How does the Kingdom of God come to us who are still in the age of the Church and are only on the way toward the Kingdom? The Kingdom of God comes to us through the *Sign* of the Church, for in it the manifestation of the Kingdom has already begun. Here Revelation is continually being turned into event. That holds true not only of those actions which in the narrower sense of the Word are called Sacraments, but also of the proclamation of the Word. In the thought of Luther the Word is the fundamental factor in the sacramental existence of the Church. When we speak of *the Word*, however, we do not mean a multitude of words nor the communication of a doctrine or the expositions of subjective views and personal experiences, which are only too common in the Protestant Church. There is and will always remain a tremendous difference between the *Church of the Word* and *the Church of Words*. The latter is a caricature of the former.

The Word is something that happens. In it God is always bringing about the rise and fall of many, for the Word is always operative and effective. When we speak about the Word in the Evangelical Church, we are not entering the sphere of psychological and moralistic or purely emotional "nominalism", where "words" take the place of "reality", but we enter the sphere of Revelation which is wholly real. The Word is not to be understood in the cognitive sense of Greek Philosophy but in the Hebrew sense of the Old Testament theology where the Word is addressed to man and where it forms the means of God's Revelation. The Word is altogether a human Word, but God takes it into His own mouth *ubi et quando visum est deo*. The Word is not only the means of preparation for the salvation that later becomes real in the sacramental action, but the Word is itself *Heilsgeschehen* or the act of salvation.

The other outward visible sign of the Church is Baptism. It is an eschatological and sacramental act. In Baptism it is the *eschaton* which is actually proclaimed, the Kingdom of God

itself, which through this outward visible action breaks into the old world. In Baptism man receives eschatological quality. What is spoken of there is not only a *cognitio salutis*, but in all seriousness a causative action. Karl Barth is hardly right when in his work *The Teaching of the Church regarding Baptism* he speaks of Baptism in the New Testament as *responsible Baptism*, which has significance only as the proclamation, in its strongest form, of a salvation which has already become reality. On the contrary, according to the early Christian view, Baptism is actually the place where the aeon of the new righteousness and the new life break through to the individual. By Baptism we become members of the new humanity whose Head is Christ. Here is the beginning of a new thing which comes to perfection only in the life eternal.

Again, in Holy Communion we are faced with a sacramental and eschatological act of the Kingdom of God, where the coming Kingdom with its joy and life are here already as reality in the present. In Holy Communion the crucified and yet living Christ gives Himself to us for the remission of sins and for eternal life. In the Lord's Supper we are drawn into the sacrifice of Christ. The elements are *signs*, but what is the meaning of *signs*? They are neither memorial signs, nor confessional signs, but they are signs for a reality that is actually and truly present, the bearers of Christ's living reality. Neither a materialisation nor a spiritualisation of these signs does justice to the early Christian conception of the Eucharist. The Lord's Supper is *cibus viatorum*, the meal of the Kingdom to come offered here in the midst of the old earth. It is grounded upon what happened on the Cross, and it points forward to the great meal in the Kingdom of God where the living Christ will be manifestly present. Here on earth the Eucharist is the sacred meal, where the crucified and risen Lord, hidden under the signs, comes to us and gives Himself to us. The Eucharist is, therefore, an eschatological joy-feast. Christ is actually among us, and yet *Maranatha*—"our Lord, come".

This is the mystery of the Church that Christ who is and ever will be the fulness of the Kingdom comes to us hidden under human and earthly signs in the Word, in Baptism and in Holy Communion. At the same time this hidden coming is a sacramental and eschatological reality. When the Kingdom

comes, then the age of the Church, the age of the signs and even the age of faith is past, for then we shall enter into the age of direct sight, into the promised *visio dei*, where we shall no longer walk by faith but by sight (διὰ πίστεως οὐ διὰ εἴδους). Everything in the Church, then, is under the sign *till He come*, so that when Calvin, as we mentioned above, prefaced an edition of his *Institutes* with the words *Quousque Domine?* that was not for him a pious and sentimental expression, but of the genuine stuff of theology.

The Kingdom of God and the Church are not identical. The Church is not the Kingdom of God, but it is her task here on the old earth, with her signs and her order, to be the *instrument* for the coming Kingdom of God. The Kingdom remains the critical frontier of the Church which cannot be broken down or done away.

At the same time the Kingdom of God is the divine substance or content of the Church, and her irrevocable promise. As the Apology of the Augsburg Confession puts it, "till He come" the Church will be the *regnum gratiae Christi, tectum cruce, quia nondum revelatum est regnum Christi* ("the Kingdom of the grace of Christ, hidden under the cross, so long as the Kingdom of Christ is not yet revealed"). In the words of the Barmen Declaration of 1934, the Church is the congregation of the brethren "among whom Jesus Christ as Lord is presently at work in Word and Sacrament through the Holy Ghost. . . . As the Church of pardoned sinners she must witness to the fact that she is owned by Him alone and that she lives and wants to live only by His comfort and by His command in the expectation of His coming."

ST. MARK 4.1-34

by The Rev. C. E. B. CRANFIELD

Part I

Mark 4.1-34 is a stretch of the Gospel where it is specially important for the English-speaking student working under the guidance of Rawlinson's great commentary[1] to be aware that much water has flowed under the bridge since 1925; for during the last quarter of a century much has been published that bears directly on the exegesis of this section.[2] The problem of the parables of Jesus is so fascinating, so tantalisingly difficult, and of such obvious importance, that we are forced to return to it again and again. In the first part of this article we shall look at vv. 3-9 and 13-20; in the second part we hope to look at the structure of the whole section and then to concentrate our attention on the notorious *crux interpretum*, vv. 11 and 12.

Mark clearly wanted to give special prominence to this section which contains Jesus' teaching in parables. He has emphasised its importance by providing it with a frame (vv. 1 f. and 33 f.), which serves to mark it off from its environment,

[1] A. E. J. Rawlinson, *The Gospel according to St. Mark* (1925, 7th ed. 1949).

[2] The following list may be of some use, though it is by no means complete and the present writer does not claim to have seen all the literature mentioned in it.

A. van Veldhuizen, articles in Nieuwe Theologische Studiën, 8 (1925), pp. 129-133; 10 (1927), pp. 42-44, on the ἵνα in Mark 4.12; G. Dalman, *Viererlei Acker*, in Palästinajahrbuch 22 (1926), pp. 120-132; H. Pernot, *Greek and the Gospels*, in ET 38 (1926), pp. 103-108; H. Windisch, *Die Verstockungsidee in Mc. 4.12 und das kausale ἵνα der späteren Koine*, in ZNW 26 (1927), pp. 203-209; A. Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus* (1929), pp. 424 ff.; P. Fiebig, *Rabbinische Gleichnisse* (1929); H. Weinel, *Die Gleichnisse Jesu* (5th ed. 1929); W. Lowrie, *Jesus according to St. Mark* (1929), pp. 127-132, 189-202; R. Bultmann, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* (2nd ed. 1931), pp. 179-222; A. T. Cadoux, *The Parables of Jesus* (1931); E. C. Hoskyns and F. N. Davey, *The Riddle of the New Testament* (1931, 3rd ed. 1947), pp. 116-145; T. W. Manson, *The Teaching of Jesus* (1931), pp. 57-81; A. Nygren, *Agape and Eros, Part I* (Eng. trans. 1932), pp. 56-65; J. Schniewind, *Das Evangelium nach Markus* (1934, 5th ed. 1949); R. H. Lightfoot, *History and Interpretation in the Gospels* (1935), pp. 74 ff.; C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (1935); W. O. E. Oesterley, *The Gospel Parables in the light of their Jewish Background* (1936); F. D. Gealy, *The Composition of Mark iv*, in ET 48 (1936), pp. 40-43; D. W. Riddle, *Mark 4.1-34: The Evolution of a Gospel Source*, in JBL 56 (1937), pp. 77-90; B. T. D. Smith, *The Parables of the Synoptic Gospels* (1937); E. Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Markus* (1937, 2nd ed. 1951); also *Vom Sinn der Gleichnisse Jesu*, in Z. f. syst. Theol. (1938), pp. 319-346; W. Michaelis, *Es ging ein Sämann aus zu säen* (1938); E. Stauffer,

and by giving in v. 1 a particularly detailed description of the scene.[1] Moreover, within this section he has specially underlined the importance of the parable of the sower. It is placed first and both introduced and concluded by a *Weck-Formel*, a summons to pay attention (at the beginning "Hearken" and at the end "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear"). Lohmeyer compares the first *Weck-Formel* with the opening of Deut. 6.4: "Hear (LXX: Ἄκουε), O Israel: the LORD our God is one LORD. . . ."[2] That was Israel's fundamental law and the devout Jew's daily-recited creed. That this parable is particularly important and indeed the key to all other parables is further implied by v. 13.[3]

Let us first consider vv. 3-8 (the actual parable of the sower) quite independently of the explanation, that is given later, and try indeed to forget vv. 13-20 altogether for the time being. What feature of the parable provides the key to its understanding? Rawlinson, Lowrie, Dodd, B. T. D. Smith, Jeremias, all

article on ἵνα in Kittel's TWzNT, III (1938), pp. 324-334; R. Otto, *The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man* (English trans. 1938), pp. 138-146; R. N. Flew, *Jesus and His Church* (1938), pp. 62-64, on Mark 4.11; H. D. Wendland, *Von den Gleichnissen Jesu und ihrer Botschaft*, in Die Theologin 11 (1941), pp. 17-29; H. Roux, *L'Evangile du Royaume* (1942), pp. 163-175; W. Manson, *Jesus the Messiah* (1943), pp. 36, 46-49, 55; E. Lohmeyer, *Das Gleichnis von der Saat*, in Deutsche Theologie (1943), pp. 20-39; M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (1946), pp. 153-158, on Mark 4.12; J. Jeremias, *Die Gleichnisse Jesu* (1947), from which some of this bibliography is derived; C. K. Barrett, *The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition* (1947), pp. 88 f., 92; G. S. Duncan, *Jesus, Son of Man* (1948), pp. 213-217; E. Stauffer, *Die Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (4th improved ed. 1948), pp. 36, 163; A. M. Hunter, *The Gospel according to St. Mark* (1948); R. S. Wallace, *The Parable and the Preacher*, in SJT 2 (1949), pp. 13-28; R. Morgenthaler, *Formgeschichte und Gleichnisauslegung*, in Theol. Zeitschrift 6 (1950), pp. 1-16; T. F. Torrance, *A Study in New Testament Communication*, in SJT 3 (1950), pp. 298-313; A. M. Hunter, *The Work and Words of Jesus* (1950), p. 45; J. A. Findlay, *Jesus and His Parables* (1950); G. H. Boobyer, *The Interpretation of the Parables of Jesus*, in ET 62 (1951), pp. 131-134; we may also mention articles on "Mystery" by G. S. Hendry and "Parable" by A. G. Hebert in *A Theological Word Book of the Bible*, ed. by A. Richardson. Kittel's TWzNT has not yet reached παραβολή, and μυστήριον comes in the part of Vol. IV that is at present not easily accessible in Britain; but reference should be made to the articles on both these words in W. Bauer's *Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des NTs usw* (3rd ed. 1937, 4th ed. in progress).

[1] Cf. Lohmeyer, *Das Ev. des Markus*, p. 82: "So reich hat Mk nicht wieder die Umgebung Jesu bei einer Rede geschildert; diese Lehre 'in Gleichnissen' wird so zur Mitte des Evangeliums." Schniewind also (op. cit., p. 73) notes that the parables in this section "vor anderen als wichtig herausgehoben werden".

[2] Cf. Swete ad loc., though he also compares such examples as Gen. 23.5.

[3] Cf. Roux, op. cit., p. 168: "En ce sens [that it describes the situation of the hearers in the face of the proclamation of the Gospel] elle est bien, comme le laisse entendre Jésus dans Marc (4.13), la clef de toutes les autres paraboles." Lohmeyer further notes that the wording of this parable is almost exactly the same in Mark and Matt.—"ein Zeichen der Treue und der Wichtigkeit, die gerade diese Parabel hat" (op. cit., p. 83).

seize on the abundance of the harvest as the *springender Punkt*, though their interpretations differ.

Rawlinson quotes Menzies with approval: "The parable gives us under a thin disguise the experience of Jesus as a preacher." He goes on: "The main point is that there is enough success assured to make the work abundantly worth while, and in this sense the parable was adapted to encourage the missionaries of Christianity in Apostolic days in the face of apparent failure. The parable, then, is not about the Kingdom of God, but about preaching"—but why not about the Kingdom of God, for is it not the Kingdom of God that is encountered in the preaching? Rawlinson, however, gives a possible alternative: "or, perhaps, in its original application as uttered by our Lord, about the responsibility of listening. To St. Mark's mind the parable may have served to illustrate the contrast between responsive hearers (i.e. the disciples) and unresponsive hearers (i.e. the Jews)—(B. W. Bacon)."[1]

Lowrie is extremely critical of this chapter. "I do not find it possible," he says, "to comment in an orderly manner upon so disorderly a chapter." He ascribes to the later reflection of the Church the "detailed embroidery" of the parable which prepares the way for the explanation in vv. 13 ff. The parable, "when shorn of its later embellishments, remarks how amazing it is that, in spite of all the seed that is lost in various ways, there is yet a most bountiful harvest. . . . If one will only observe that wonder, he will be ready to accept (not to understand!) the mysterious secret of the Kingdom of God—how there comes about 'without observation', from such small beginnings, so incomparable an effect." In other words, the point of the parable of the sower is just the same as that of the mustard seed![2]

Dodd, as might be expected, sees "realised eschatology" here. "The crop is ripe: it is time to reap. But, they might have objected, even the work of John the Baptist has not brought about that complete 'restoration of all things' (Mark 9.12) which was anticipated as the immediate prelude to the Day of the Lord. Much of his work, as of the work of all the prophets, has been a failure. True, says Jesus; but no farmer yet delayed to reap a good crop because there were bare patches

[1] op. cit., p. 50. [2] op. cit., pp. 196, 198 f.

in the field. In spite of all, the harvest is plentiful: it is only the labourers that are lacking. 'Pray the Lord of the harvest to send labourers into His harvest.' "[1]

B. T. D. Smith also thinks that the emphasis was originally on the rich harvest on the fertile soil and that the original intention of the parable was to encourage the disciples to believe that the preaching of the Kingdom would be fruitful.[2]

For Jeremias, too, Jesus' original point is that "In spite of all failure the revelation of the Kingdom of God comes". "Once more we have a parable of contrast before us. It depicts on the one side the in many ways unsuccessful work of the sower; for it is merely this that the depicting of the soils is meant to express. . . . Contrasted with this unsuccessful work is the rich harvest-blessing. Though much work seems to men's eyes to be in vain and unsuccessful, though failure may seem to follow on failure, Jesus is full of joy and confidence: God's hour comes and with it a harvest beyond our prayers or understanding."[3]

Schniewind, on the other hand, seizes on a different feature of the parable. For him it is the preponderance of failure over success that is the key. Three times failure is described, only once success. He takes it to mean that three quarters of the seed is wasted. "One must not put this down to the bad agriculture of Palestine. Even in Palestine a farmer who let three quarters of his seed be lost would be grotesque. But perhaps Jesus meant precisely this grotesque thing! . . . The normal success of the Word of God is failure. This basic experience runs through the whole OT and NT. . . . But this experience is certainly something unheard of, altogether unnatural; that is why it can only be expressed in such a peculiar figure as that of the four-fold field.—That nevertheless God's Word is not spoken in vain, but rewards the sower with the richest harvest, that was already expressed in the OT (Isa. 55.10 f.). . . . And the next two parables of Jesus set it forth. But first of all the fundamental idea of this parable must remain unweakened. It corresponds exactly with that which we have established concerning Jesus' Messianic Secret, concerning His lack of success. . . . " For Schniewind then this parable is emphasising that God's ways are in men's eyes "foolishness" and "weakness"; the fact of

[1] op. cit., pp. 182 f. [2] op. cit., p. 126.
[3] op. cit., p. 112 (my transl.). See also p. 6 for Palestinian background of the parable.

the abundant harvest is here not the main point that is being made, though it points to that which is the meaning of the two succeeding parables—that "the foolishness of God is", indeed, "wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men".[1]

Bultmann in his *Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* is simply pessimistic about the possibility of knowing what the original meaning of the parable was, and leaves us with a series of questions: Is the parable meant as comfort for those whose labour is not all successful? Or a warning to those who hear the Word of God, or Jesus' preaching, or the Church's preaching? Or is it to be understood in the sense of 4 Ezra (2 Esdras) 8.41?[2]

The interpretations of Oesterley, Roux and A. M. Hunter have this in common, that they give more weight to the differences of soil and so make it a parable about hearing the Word of God. Oesterley goes so far as to suggest what groups of people Jesus has in mind. So the wayside refers to those who have heard and rejected the Word—the Pharisees, the rocky ground he refers to the Galileans, highly impressionable, but fickle and unstable, and in particular to those of them who were under the influence of apocalyptic visionaries, the thorny ground he refers to the poor and to the rich, while the good ground represents the disciples, both the Twelve and others.[3] This is perhaps to go rather far in particularising.

Roux, on the other hand, points out that "Jesus did not wish to give a sort of exhaustive list of the diverse reactions of the world" to the Word of the Kingdom of God; "He simply draws attention to the fact that the Word being spoken is most often lost. At the same time it also happens—and it is a real miracle—that the seed finds a good soil, that for which it was destined; it happens in this hostile world that the Word is heard, understood, and bears fruit. When Jesus comes with the Word of the Kingdom, when the Kingdom contained in power in this Word, hidden and secret like the plant which exists in promise in the seed, comes into the world, the judgment and the grace of God manifest themselves at the same time. . . ."[4] The pivot of the parable is the event, of which

[1] op. cit., p. 74 (my transl.).
[2] op. cit., p. 216.
[3] op. cit., pp. 39-51.
[4] op. cit., pp. 168 f. (my transl.).

Jesus Himself is the author: the seed is sown. It is to be understood christologically. But it is an appeal for faith, for the right hearing of the Word of the Kingdom.

Hunter's interpretation is as follows: "In this parable we hear Jesus thinking aloud about the fortunes of his work in Galilee, with its mixture of failure and success, and the point surely is this: the seed (which is the Good News of the Reign of God preached by Jesus) is all good, but for its development everything depends on the ground in which it falls. So we may say that the parable illustrates the different receptions given to the appeal of Jesus and the Kingdom of God, and is meant to impress a sense of responsibility upon his hearers. It says pictorially: 'Take heed how ye hear.' So understood, it might be better called 'The Parable of the Four Different Soils'."[1] Here it should be made clear that in saying "for its development everything depends on the ground in which it falls" we must not deny what is signified by the "is given" of v. 11! Only God can make a hearer to be good soil!

So here there is a return to Rawlinson's hint in his second alternative—"the responsibility of listening".

How then are we to interpret this parable? According to some of the interpretations we have looked at the parable was addressed particularly to the disciples: that is particularly so with Rawlinson's first alternative and with B. T. D. Smith's interpretation.[2] But, although it is likely that v. 1 is an artificial scene for this and the other parables in this section, is it not likely that there is some truth in the idea that the parables were particularly addressed to the multitudes (cf. vv. 33 f.)? On the whole, it is a point in favour of an interpretation if it explains this parable as addressed to the crowds rather than to the disciples. That means that it is a less probable exegesis that finds the main point to be to encourage the disciples in their preaching. Dodd's interpretation seems to the present writer at any rate an ingenious *tour de force* in the interests of the theory of "realised eschatology" rather than a natural interpretation of the parable as it stands in vv. 3-8. Both Jeremias' and Schniewind's interpretations, though opposed in their emphases,

[1] *The Gospel according to St. Mark*, p. 55.

[2] Oesterley also (op. cit., p. 51) says: "This parable was spoken to Christ's closest disciples, and explained something to them which at first they found difficult to understand: why do so few respond?"

seem to be fair enough so far as they go (though one might question Schniewind's assumption that to mention failure three times and success once is tantamount to saying that three quarters of the seed is lost and one quarter bears fruit). But is not Hunter right in seeing the stress laid in this parable upon the appeal to hear aright? If the two appeals to "hear" in vv. 3 and 9 are actually part of what Jesus said on this occasion and not just added in the tradition or by Mark, then that would point in this direction. What we have here is a parable on *hearing* the Word of God, the Gospel of the Kingdom, which Jesus both preaches and is. It is directed to the multitudes, not just to the disciples (though it was relevant to them too). The hearer is challenged to ask himself "What sort of ground am I?" and to let himself be the good ground. That is not to deny that it is only by God's gift that any man is good soil—does hear aright, does have faith (cf. Mark 10.27).

The *springender Punkt*, then, of the parable, the point at which the hearers are challenged to take action, is the differences of soil: they are summoned to ask themselves which sort of ground they are, how they are receiving the seed which even now is being sown in them? They are urged to be good ground, to hear the Word of the Kingdom of God aright, with faith. Yet it is also absolutely true that *in a sense* the emphasis falls not here but on the action of the sower. The parable gets its whole significance from the fact that Jesus *is* the Messiah and that in Him the Kingdom of God is confronting men and the word of the Kingdom, the good seed, is being sown by Him. What is said by Hoskyns and Davey about the "christological penetration" of the parables is most certainly true.[1] They depend for their significance on the fact that the Kingdom has come in Jesus and they can only be understood when this fact is recognised. That is the *mysterion*, which is the clue to all the parables. So the parables, like the miracles, are part of the announcement of the Kingdom of God. As Hoskyns and Davey point out in this connexion, the very choice of simile and metaphor by Jesus is significant—they are OT themes, and in the OT the themes of sowing and harvest have a Messianic significance. So this parable of the sower or of the soils sets forth the situation of the hearers in face of the message of the Kingdom of

[1] op. cit., pp. 126-135.

God and challenges them to hear it aright. It is a parable about hearing the Word of God. Now we understand why it is given such prominence.

We may compare Luke 11.28, Luke 6.47-49=Matt. 7.24-27, John 8.51, Jas. 1.21 ff. The first of these references is perhaps the best commentary on this parable.

We must turn now to vv. 13-20. Many scholars regard the case against the authenticity of the explanation of the parable (as coming from Jesus Himself) as established—an assured result of modern criticism. So, for instance, Bultmann characterises it as "without doubt secondary"[1] and Dodd dismisses it in a somewhat cavalier fashion: "It is not necessary, after Jülicher, to show once again that the interpretation is not consistent with itself, and does not really fit the parable. But it is worth while observing that it is a striking example of the way in which the early Church re-interpreted sayings and parables of Jesus to suit its changing needs."[2] But perhaps this certainty is premature?

Let us consider the various arguments urged against vv. 13 ff. in turn.

(1) That the interpretation allegorises the parable. For those who accept Jülicher's position unmodified this by itself is, of course, enough to damn the interpretation as unauthentic. Jülicher's *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu* was certainly a great liberator setting us free from all sorts of fantastic interpretations of the parables[3] and marked a real step forward; but Jülicher was much too doctrinaire and, moreover, failed to see the christological penetration of the parables and so reduced them to mere illustrations of general ethical principles. It is true on the whole that Jesus' parables have each a *springender Punkt* rather than requiring to be interpreted detail by detail, so that we do not have to ask, for instance, what the children in bed in Luke 11.7 represent. Usually most of the details are put in simply to make the story life-like and vivid. But this does not mean that every allegorical element in the parables of Jesus is therefore to be discarded as unauthentic. It is not possible to sustain a sharp and clear separation between parables and allegories, for in practice parables often contain allegorical elements. "In prac-

[1] "zweifellos sekundär"—op. cit., p. 202.
[2] op. cit., p. 181.
[3] For which see Dodd, op. cit., pp. 11 f.

tice most allegories contain simile, and most similitudes are tinged with metaphor."[1] Moreover—and this cannot be too much stressed—*parabolé* in the LXX and in the Gospels does not have its Greek meaning (as in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* II.xx.2-4),[2] but is the equivalent of the Hebrew *mashal* and covers all its meanings—and *mashal* can mean "allegory" as well as "parable" in our usual (i.e. the Greek) sense.[3] So, while we do well to be warned by Jülicher against trying to treat all the parables as allegories, we must not be so doctrinaire as he was.

We must, certainly, allow for the fact that the parables have been preserved for us by the early Church and therefore for the probability that they have sometimes been more or less modified in the course of tradition. One of the ways in which it is likely that modification has taken place is through the tendency towards allegorisation. We can indeed see this at work, when we compare the Gospels with each other—e.g. Matt. 22.1-14 and Luke 14.16-24, where we can see in Matthew as against Luke "a series of modifications, which originate in the tendency towards allegorisation (*Trieb zum Allegorisieren*)".[4] It is *possible* that this tendency has been at work in Mark 4.3-8 and that it is responsible for vv. 13-20; but it is by no means certain. The fact that the early Church tended to change similitude into allegory does not justify us in regarding every element of allegory in the parables as the creation of the early Church.[5]

(2) Closely connected with the preceding argument is that which maintains that a parable is meant to illustrate and make plain and therefore cannot itself require an explanation. So it is urged that Jesus' parables were all at the time clear enough, but that later, partly because the original context had been forgotten and so also the point of the parable,[6] partly because of the above-mentioned tendency to allegorisation, and partly through the influence of Hellenistic religion, there grew up the idea that they were "mysteries" requiring interpretation, and

[1] Hoskyns and Davey, op. cit., p. 128.
[2] cited by T. W. Manson, op. cit., pp. 57 f. [3] See further Part II.
[4] Jeremias, op. cit., p. 42. See whole section on "Die Allegorisierung" pp. 41-59.
[5] But Bultmann says that he does not regard the interpretation as unauthentic *because* it allegorises the parable—he thinks that actually it does not allegorise it —but on other grounds. So too B. T. D. Smith—op. cit., pp. 127 f.
[6] Cf. Rawlinson, op. cit., p. 47.

that the interpretation was an esoteric teaching. We shall have more to say about the question of the influence of the pagan mysteries in Part II. It is enough here to point out that vv. 13-20 are a remarkably poor attempt at esoteric teaching of the sort that pagans dealt in! As to the loss of original contexts, it must of course be admitted that many parables are for this reason much more problematic now than they will have been originally. But the mainspring of this second argument against the authenticity of vv. 13-20 is really the assumption that *parabolé* in the Gospels has its classical Greek meaning and that Jesus' parables were simply illustrations of moral principles and of a general sort of piety; but, on the one hand, as we shall see in Part II, *mashal* can mean a dark perplexing saying or riddle that is meant to stimulate hard thinking, and, on the other hand, Jesus' parables were not told to adorn moral platitudes but to point to the significance of the divine act of the Kingdom of God, that is, to the significance of His own person and ministry. And, as the truth, to which the parables were to bear witness, is something that can only be recognised by faith, we should not be surprised to find that they themselves were perplexing, even when first uttered.[1] So it is hardly surprising that sometimes the disciples should have asked for an explanation and that Jesus should have given it. As a matter of fact there are only two parables which have an *extended* interpretation by Jesus appended—this one and the parable of the tares; but Jesus does indicate the interpretation on other occasions, e.g. Mark 2.17, Matt. 6.24, 7.9-11, 24-27, 11.16-19. Bultmann himself admits that he does not deny the authenticity of vv. 13 ff. on the ground that an explanation in itself is impossible, for occasionally rabbinic parables also have explanations appended.[2]

(3) That the interpretation is not consistent with itself and does not fit the parable.[3] It is true that there is a certain looseness of form. In vv. 16, 18, and 20 the seed is identified with the hearers, although v. 14 says expressly, and the interpretation generally implies, that the seed is the word. Jeremias thinks that two distinct ideas are here mixed up, both of which are to be found in 4 Ezra—that God's Word is seed (9.31) and

[1] See further Part II. [2] op. cit., p. 202.

[3] Dodd, op. cit., p. 181. Cf. B. T. D. Smith, op. cit., p. 128, and Bultmann, "Inkonzinnität der Deutung der Einzelzüge".

that men are seed sown by God (8.41).[1] But it is surely more likely that what we have here is simply clumsy or careless speaking or writing.[2] Schniewind notes that this "carelessness of form" has parallels in contemporary Jewish parables.[3] The form of the sentences ("these are they . . . ") is well illustrated from *Tanchuma* 29.103.[4]

(4) That the concentration of attention on the losses destroys the balance of the parable.[5] It is true that a rather bigger proportion of the interpretation than of the parable is given to the losses. But does this really destroy the balance? The harvest, being mentioned at the end, has most emphasis.[6]

(5) That the interpretation represents the parable as an illustration of the history of Christian mission-preaching, the author wanting his readers to know that the reasons for failure were all foreseen by Jesus.[7] Lowrie argues that the interpretation reflects, not Jesus', but the early Church's experience—"there had not yet been time to note the gradual effect of the choking of the seeds by weeds, or even the effect of the scorching sun. So far as we know, his followers had not yet been subjected to any persecution."[8] But did the weeds require such a long time? Mark 10.17-22 gives an example of the choking of the seed by weeds—very quickly, and in the presence of Jesus. And were there not disciples who walked no more with Him?[9] Presumably some of them failed because of the weeds.

[1] op. cit., p. 51.

[2] McNeile on Matt. par. (p. 193) has a subtle—too subtle?—explanation.

[3] op. cit., p. 78. Cf. Lohmeyer, op. cit., p. 84: on the following page he says: "Die Bindung an die Sache bleibt also eng und streng; nur die an das überlieferte Wort ist hier loser geworden."

[4] Quoted by Schlatter, op. cit., p. 433 f.:

מָשָׁל הֵם דְּבָרִים מָה שֶׁאָמַר יוֹתָם: הָעֵצִים אִלּוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל
זַיִת זֶה עָתְנִיאֵל תְּאֵנָה זוּ דְּבוֹרָה גֶּפֶן זֶה בָּרָק וְגִדְעוֹן
הָאָטָד זֶה אֲבִימֶלֶךְ:

[5] B. T. D. Smith, op. cit., p. 128.

[6] Schlatter, op. cit., p. 437 f., says: "Darin, dass die abnormen Vorgänge, die die Wirkung des Wortes zerstören, in der Deutung plastischer hervortreten als das normale Verhalten, zeigt sich wieder, dass die Aufmerksamkeit des Mat. [he writes on the Matt. par.] vor allem der Abwehr des sündlichen Verhaltens gilt. Dass das Wort Frucht schafft, beruht auf Gottes Wirken und bleibt Geheimnis. Was dagegen das Wort zerstört, das liegt im Bereich des menschlichen Blicks und Willens und wird der Kirche deutlich gezeigt."

[7] B. T. D. Smith, op. cit., p. 128.

[8] op. cit., p. 197.

[9] John 6.66.

And are we to regard all references by Jesus to persecution as unauthentic (e.g. Mark 8.34, 38; Matt. 5.10-12, 22)? Jesus had before Him the examples of the prophets (e.g. Jeremiah) and the persecuted godly one of the Psalms. Even if there were no signs of opposition, He would surely realise what was likely to happen,[1] and opposition was already in evidence according to Mark 3.6, although Lowrie says: "Jesus' experience was not at all like that of Isaiah [referring to Mark 4.12], for almost everyone was still acclaiming him, which hardly agrees with the parable's purposely exaggerated account of the pitiful loss of seed." Moreover, Jesus knew that not everyone who said to Him, "Lord, Lord" would enter into the Kingdom of God and the fact that now people were acclaiming Him was not a guarantee that at the last they would stand. The harvest is eschatological: it does not refer merely to present apparent results. We must not attribute to our Lord the folly of those Church people who count success by the numbers in Church on Sunday evening instead of realising that the only ultimately significant standard is the numbers who will finally enter the Kingdom of God!

(6) Closely connected with the preceding is the further argument that vv. 13-20 include "words which are not proper to the rest of the Synoptic record", and that "this whole passage (vv. 11-20) is strikingly unlike in language and style to the majority of the sayings of Jesus".[2] The words which Dodd objects to in vv. 11-20 are: "mystery" and "them that are without" in v. 11, which we shall consider in Part II, and "endure for a while" (*πρόσκαιρος*) and "deceitfulness" (*ἀπάτη*), two Greek words that do not occur in the Synoptic Gospels outside this passage, *ἐπιθυμία* (here rendered "lusts") which is found elsewhere in the Synoptics only in Luke 22.15 and there in a different sense, and "tribulation" (*θλῖψις*) and "persecution" (*διωγμός*) found only elsewhere in the Synoptics in Mark 10.30 and in Mark 13, "passages which are for other reasons suspected of being secondary".[3] Here Jeremias joins in. He says that he has long striven against the conclusion that the interpretation (vv. 13-20) is to be attributed not to Jesus but

[1] Cf. C. E. Robinson, *The Gospel according to St. Mark*, p. 82: "to forecast such coming trials and their inevitable results needed no special foresight for the founder of a religion such as His."

[2] Dodd, op. cit., pp. 13 f.

[3] ibid., p. 14 (note 1).

to the early Church, but that it is unavoidable even on linguistic grounds alone; for the use of "the word" (*ὁ λόγος*) absolutely is a technical term for the Gospel coined and often used by the early Church (e.g. Mark 1.45, 2.2, 4.33), but only here on the lips of Jesus—and here eight times in Mark, five in Matt., and three in Luke. But we suggest that Jesus may have used the Aramaic equivalent of "Gospel" or perhaps "my words" (cf. Matt. 7.24) or "the Word of God" (cf. Luke 11.28), and the early Church may have substituted the absolute use, because it had come to be commonly used: that does not prove that the saying containing it is unauthentic. Anyway, is it altogether inconceivable that the absolute use goes back to Jesus Himself? Jeremias also notes a number of statements about the Word which are made here, but are not otherwise found on Jesus' lips, though they are common in the early Church: e.g. the Word is received (cf. 1 Thess. 1.6 also "with joy", Acts 17.11, Jas. 1.21), persecution arises because of the word (cf. 1 Thess. 1.6, 2 Tim. 1.8, 2.9), the word causes offence (cf. 1 Pet. 2.8), the word grows (cf. Acts 6.7, 12.24, 19.20, Col. 1.6), the word bears fruit (cf. Col. 1.6). The last two are natural enough for anyone explaining *this* parable. With persecution for the word we may compare "lose his life for my sake and the gospel's" in Mark 8.35 and with the word causing offence (RV "they stumble", Gk. *σκανδαλίζονται*) compare Mark 6.3, 14.27, Matt. 11.6 and 15.12. "Receiving the word" is a natural enough expression, especially when there is a comparison with soil receiving the seed—though once more we may admit that some of the forms of expression may come from the early Church without regarding the whole interpretation as unauthentic. Jeremias then goes on to note the words which occur in vv. 13-20 but not elsewhere in the Synoptics, while they are familiar in other early Christian literature, especially Paul's writings: "sow" as metaphor for preaching, "root" as metaphor for inward stability (in NT otherwise only in Col. 2.7, Eph. 3.17), *πρόσκαιρος* ("endure for a while"), "a Graecism, to which there is no corresponding adjective in Aramaic", "deceitfulness", *πλοῦτος* ("riches"), "unfruitful", "accept", "bear fruit" (in metaphorical sense). Like Dodd, he also mentions *διωγμός* ("persecution") and *ἐπιθυμία* ("lusts"). He notes also that *μέριμνα* ("cares") is only used once otherwise in the Gospels and

that in a secondary passage—Luke 21.34.[1] This looks an impressive list till one examines it! As far as the metaphorical use of "sow", "root", "unfruitful", "bear fruit" is concerned, surely the reason is simply that it *is* an explanation of a parable about *sowing* after all! The words πρόσκαιροί εἰσιν ("endure for a while") are rendered into Hebrew by Franz Delitzsch in his Hebrew New Testament as *w^eraq l^esha'ah ya'^amodhu. Sha'ah* is an Aramaic word used in Daniel. Might not something like this phrase have been used by Jesus?[2] "Accept" (παραδέχεσθαι) as a synonym for "receive" (λαμβάνειν) does not seem to imply anything about the original Aramaic. So, too, with "persecution" and "care", as the verbs are used elsewhere in the Synoptics, the use of the substantives here hardly amounts to much. The fact that these Greek words are not otherwise used in Mark may indeed prove that the interpretation is not Mark's creation and not his translation,[3] but it does not prove that the passage is unauthentic.

(7) That the interpretation misses the eschatological point of the parable and shifts the stress from the eschatological to the psychological and paraenetic.[4] But is not this to misunderstand the interpretation? Surely it is eschatological through and through. The harvest referred to in v. 20 is no mere psychological harvest; it is at the last judgment, the *Parousia.* The present writer cannot see that vv. 13-20, when rightly understood, are any more psychological or less eschatological than, for instance, Luke 12.13-31. According to the interpretation the urgency of the question how the Word is received lies precisely in the eschatological consequences of right or wrong hearing.

(8) That the interpretation has turned the parable into admonishment addressed to the converted.[5] That these verses would be suitable as *eine Mahnung an die Konvertiten* and may well have been used in this way by the early Church may be readily admitted; but surely they are just as suitable on the lips of Jesus explaining to His disciples the parable He has previously told the multitudes. We take it that the parable was in its original intention just what the interpretation would suggest,

[1] op. cit., pp. 49-51. [2] πρόσκαιρος also occurs in 4 Macc. 15.2.
[3] Cf. Jeremias, op. cit., p. 52, Lohmeyer, op. cit., p. 85.
[4] Jeremias, op. cit., pp. 51, 112.
[5] ibid., p. 112. Cf. Smith, op. cit., p. 59.

an appeal and warning to those who were flocking to hear His preaching, that they should understand what is at stake and should hear the Word aright and cleave to it.

We do not claim that we have proved conclusively that vv. 13-20 are authentic! But we do claim that the above discussion is enough to show that the question is still an open one and that those who imagine that the *un*authenticity of the interpretation is an assured result of modern criticism are premature. The present writer is inclined to think it rather more likely that the explanation goes back to Jesus Himself than that it does not; but the safest course is to say with Schniewind that the question is an open one.[1] That it is possible that the actual wording has been modified by the usage of the Early Church must, of course, be admitted. As to the further question, whether the general line of interpretation in vv. 13-20 is the true interpretation of the parable in vv. 3-8, it must be said that the answer to this does *not* depend on the answer to the former question. Here, in spite of the opinions of Dodd, Jeremias and the others, we feel bound to agree with A. M. Hunter that "the interpretation draws out what we take to be the meaning of the parable as Jesus told it".[2] We may also add, as he does, that it "seems based on genuine reflections of Jesus about the causes which led men to reject His message (persecution, distracting anxiety, the love of money)."[3]

The parable of the sower and the soils, then, was first addressed to the multitudes who had gathered to listen to Jesus. It was a parable about the hearing of His message, an appeal to His hearers to take heed how they heard, to ask themselves which sort of soil they were, which sort of reception they were giving to Jesus' message, an appeal to them to be good soil, not merely to hear the word with their ears and then forget, but to allow it to penetrate right down into their hearts, to keep it and cleave to it, and to let it reign supreme in their

[1] op. cit., p. 78.

[2] *The Gospel according to St. Mark*, p. 56. Cf. Schlatter, op. cit., p. 434 f.: "Deutlich ist aber, dass nicht erst die Deutung, sondern der Aufbau des Bildes selbst die vierfache Wirkung des Worts im Auge hat. Wie ein Gleichnis aussieht, wenn es nur den festen Zusammenhang zwischen der Saat und der Ernte darstellen soll, zeigt Mark 4.26-29. Wer die Deutung ablehnt, muss auch das Gleichnis ablehnen und betritt damit den Bereich der ratenden Konjektur."

[3] For another reference by Jesus to the cares of this age see Matt. 6.24-34 and to the deceitfulness of wealth see Mark 10.23 ff.; Luke 12.13-21, 33 f., 16.19-31.

lives. To such hearers there is the promise that they will bear a rich harvest—when the final judgment comes, they will enter into God's Kingdom. The parable depends for its significance, of course, upon the fact that the One who is preaching is the Messiah—the fact that the Kingdom of God has come near in Him and men are confronted with the need to decide and that their final destiny depends upon their present attitude to the Messiah in His incognito.

It is obvious that it is just as relevant to those who are confronted with the Gospel in Scripture and preaching and sacrament as it was to Jesus' own hearers. For us, too, it is a parable about hearing the Word of God, about our response to the Gospel. It is still Jesus, the Church's risen and exalted Lord, who through the ministry of Word and Sacrament sows the good seed in men's hearts. But the Word may be received in different ways. We may be like the path through the field trodden hard and smooth, which does not let the seed in but keeps it on the surface. Just as such ground leaves the seed at the mercy of the birds, so the superficial hearer who never lets the Gospel into his heart and life, who only hears it on the most superficial level, is soon going to lose that which he refuses to appropriate. We can only keep the Word, if we will be not only hearers of it but doers also. The superficial hearers (St. James' "hearers only") for a moment see themselves reflected in the mirror of the Gospel, their sin revealed and pardon and newness of life offered to them, but, instead of building their lives upon the truth they have seen, go away and forget. If we do not do the truth, we soon cease to know it—in fact we have never really known it (cf. Luke 8.18). There are others who are like the rocky soil, those patches in the field, where the rock is very close to the surface and so there is no depth of soil. In such soil the seed will grow quickly, but, when the drought comes, because it has no depth of root it will quickly wither. Jesus knew such hearers during His ministry, men who at first were full of enthusiasm to follow Him, but who had not counted the cost. It is possible to receive the Gospel with joy and be full of enthusiasm for a time but then to fall away. There are others who are like the thorny soil, where the good seed has to compete with the seed of thorns and other weeds. There is the distracted, divided heart, in which other interests are

allowed to compete with the claims of Christ. Lastly, there is the good soil. There are those who hear and understand (Matt. 13.33: *ἀκούων καὶ συνιείς*: contrast *μὴ συνίεντος* in v. 19 and *μὴ συνιῶσιν* in Mark 4.12), who receive the Word and let it into their hearts and lives (Mark 4.20: *παραδέχονται*), who are not only hearers but doers also (Jas. 1.22), "And it came to pass, as he said these things, a certain woman out of the multitude lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the breasts which thou didst suck. But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it" (Luke 11.27 f.).

Four kinds of hearers are indicated—and yet, it is also true that each of us has something of each of the first three sorts in him. Superficial, unstable, distracted—our human hearts are all "deceitful above all things, and . . . desperately sick". None of us can be good soil of himself, none of us can by his own power and wisdom and goodness hear God's Word aright. Only God can make us good soil (cf. Mark 10.27 and the "is given" in 4.11). So the summons of this passage is to prayer, that God may forgive us our superficiality, instability, distractedness, and make our hearts to be good soil, that we may hear and receive His Word and faithfully live by it.

BOOK REVIEWS

Faith and History. By Reinhold Niebuhr. Nisbet, 1949. 15s.
The Belief in Progress. By John Baillie. Oxford Univ. Press, 1950. 10s. 6d.
Christianity and History. By Herbert Butterfield. G. Bell & Sons, 1949. 7s. 6d.

These are three very different books which all deal with the same theme. The first is the work of a prophet, the second of a professional theologian, the third of a professional historian. The first and last are united by a kind of scepticism, the fruit for Niebuhr of his spiritual vision, for Butterfield at least in part of his minute historical scholarship. The second writes much more urbanely, and even ends on a note of qualified optimism.

I call Niebuhr prophet rather than theologian: for his work is inflamed at once by a peculiar urgency and by a determination to trace in the disillusionment of our age, a moment in God's argument with his people. The preface (p. v) indicates the theme: "The real alternative to the Christian faith elaborated by modern secular culture was the idea that history is itself Christ, which is to say that historical development is redemption." As a prophet he traces the roots of this conception, and here he treads the same road as Baillie: but how differently! The very characterisation indicates the difference. For the theologian it is the growth of a belief that e.g. "development" can be taken "as the master-key to all historical meaning". Whereas for Niebuhr, to whom the presence or absence of a Messianic hope is the great differentiating mark of all cultures, what stamps modernity is taking historical advance as its Christ. The reader is perhaps reminded a little of Mr Middleton Murry's assertion that for the Stalinist the Soviet Union is God: only of course from Niebuhr's perspective Mr Murry's own vision of the free society involves him in a similar idolatry. For the author of *Faith and History* as for the Hebrew prophet, it is for its idolatry that the world passes under judgment: and because our world is inescapably the world into which Christ came, its idolatry most readily manifests itself as the positing of a false Christ. Baillie and Niebuhr are profoundly in agreement in judging the hold of a cyclical view of historical change on men's heart decisively broken by the spread of Christianity. To that, Stalinist and Utopian bear unwilling witness.

At first sight Baillie seems, to a reader awakened by Niebuhr

repeatedly to new spiritual perception, to move on a level of half-hearted concession to the enemy. He could even be accused by the unwary of attempting a theological Munich with the ghosts of Tübingen to play the rôles of Führer and Duce. Yet although his work is never free from blemishes, he writes with an eye always on the pastoral problem of the Church. He sees the depth of the need created by the decline of the idea of progress. He sketches the parentage of the idea, admits for instance that in the form in which it was championed by the English Hegelians it claimed just that sovereignty of men's mind in the world that Butterfield so exquisitely exposes (p. 114). The idealists held out to men the promise of a world gradually conformed to the image of their demand for rational coherence: all contradiction resolved, the whole in its completion would give sense to its phases. Many have endorsed, have worked under the inspiration of this hope, who have never heard of the Cairds or T. H. Green. To the individual it seemed to afford his moral and intellectual struggles a purchase hold in the scheme of things, and an assurance that his dimly felt aspirations after rational order were not bubbles on the surface of events, but expressive, even somehow constitutive, of their underlying pattern.

So Baillie faces his reader (with a genuine pastoral realism) with the problem of despair. He does not mention the word, and there he is wise: for his indirect communication is effective. He is perhaps less wise in his failure to characterise those who are seeking to-day to present themselves as the true successors of the liberal and romantic tradition. I refer, of course, to the Stalinists. It is impressive to note that both in Baillie and in Niebuhr there are abundant references to Marx, and even occasionally to Engels: but the names of Lenin and Stalin do not appear in the index of either. Yet perhaps it is Lenin even more than Marx who is the maker of our age: and Stalin more than anyone who focuses the pastoral problem Baillie sees so clearly. The student of contemporary Stalinist propaganda knows very well that it is the note of hope which is continually struck. The fulfilment of that hope may be in practice less the "classless society" that lies beyond our present age of militant proletarian dictatorships, grouped around the Soviet fatherland, than the grey, terrible world of Orwell's *1984*. But in the meantime, the emphasis is continually laid on the strange *Entweder—Oder*: either Stalinism or nihilism. The crudities of the propagandists may easily conceal from the reader the effectiveness of the demand for faith: *Either here —or nowhere*. Neither Baillie nor Niebuhr pay much attention in these works to the artificial primitivism of the Fascists and its theoretical prophets: but we must not forget that historically the latter were among the first critics of the ideas of liberty, equality,

brotherhood and progress. They cast out such idols, but themselves admitted to their vacant thrones, objects of still more terrible and cruel devotion. The term "Fascist" is abused in Stalinist propaganda: we all know that, but the manner of its abuse is to try to bind together and thereby discredit all who warn us against Stalinism, as men desiring to fetter us to a world without hope.

Baillie's book is of the three the most vulnerable: it is far less searching than either Niebuhr's or Butterfield's. Its conclusion is highly suggestive, but not properly tied to the body of his historical sketch. Yet more than either perhaps he is groping for the word to speak to our day and generation. For he realises that we have had perhaps a surfeit of the "Christian understanding" of men, of history and the rest: whereas to-day we need such grandly presented wisdom less than the broken, parabolic communication with men and women where they are. Paradoxically, although often he seems very far removed from the meticulous, albeit deeply religious, scepticism of Butterfield, he is near him in judging the real heroes of Church history to be often those unnoticed, unrecorded faithful priests, pastors and ministers, who have, in spite of the manifold failure of the institutional Church, maintained unbroken testimony to Him who is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God by Him. It is not enough simply to contrast the passionate humanism of the *Dies Irae* with the plaintive self-righteousness more than occasionally characteristic of the *New Statesman and Nation.* Niebuhr knows the darker side of Church history too well to suppose for a moment that a burst of prophecy can undo the bitter heritage of the past. Yet although no man more effectively constrains his reader to see the Satanic element in ecclesiastical pretensions, he seems when it comes to the bit of the present, almost to dodge the issue. His book is one of extraordinary insight and power: it is packed tight with comments on all kinds of issues: metaphysics, revelation, eschatology, the theology of the Cross, of the sacraments. But it fails, I will not say where Baillie succeeds, but at least where he sees the problem. And perhaps it fails there because in spite of the profundity of his treatment of the Cross, Niebuhr's Christology remains hopelessly inadequate: he may poke fun at Dr Mascall's handling of the problem of Christ's human knowledge (p. 191), but his own references to the problems of the Virgin Birth and the empty tomb are in another way equally trivial. Fundamentally, his book only just escapes exhausting itself in the dialectic of ideas: it is only just a piece of Christian theology, and not a masterly prophetic essay in the philosophy of history, with Christ as the name of the most searching and most enduring solution of the problem.

Baillie does not devote space to the Christological issue: but in his last chapter with its reference to the theology of missionary hymns, he implicitly raises it. Another step: and we would surely be involved in treatment of the work of the ascended Christ. Or am I wrong? Yet surely His lordship over the world expressed in His abiding and prevailing intercession for its needs, is the continuing ground of our confidence in its order and its destiny.

Butterfield is in advance of Niebuhr here. His sense of the historical mystery of Jesus is real (p. 121). He writes with a beautiful delicacy of the background of His coming in the agonies of Israel. In the end in his famous concluding sentence, he bids his readers: "Hold to Christ, and for the rest be totally uncommitted." Throughout far more than Baillie or Niebuhr, he impresses the reader with a logical conscience, at once by his learning and his good sense. He has a shrewd grasp of the way words are used in ordinary discourse: he makes clear that no one in his senses will deny progress, but he shows how the word is wrenched from its normal ways when it is made to do service in the elaboration of a dubious metaphysic of history. His empiricism is that of the trained academic historian, but it recalls repeatedly the temper of Edmund Burke. For Butterfield displays the same deep-seated compassion for ultimate human dignity. His early onslaught on the Whig historians was itself primarily directed at the readiness of such scholars to trivialise the agonies of flesh and blood human beings, to squeeze the so-called "juices" out of their wilful pathetic twistings and turnings, to subordinate the personal to the impersonal. The same spirit is alive in this book, only tempered by maturity, and turned to more than critical purpose. One could imagine his impatience with Baillie: the impatience of one whose deep historical knowledge made him sensitive to the cruelty implicit in so much idealistic political thinking, with its readiness to sacrifice in theory if not in practice, generations of flesh and blood, men and women to the advance of an impersonal Idea: Burke far more effectively than Hobhouse lays bare the grisly foundations of Bosanquet's metaphysical state. Cautious, informed, tentative and grave, Butterfield explores his theme. He understands very well how men can impose the image of their own aspirations and preferences on the workings of providence in history: if indeed there is a providence in the affairs of men, it must be found in them as they are, and there the unexpectedness of its workings is some index of its transcendent authority. Because of this transcendence, our co-operation with it in practice is most sure where it is piecemeal and tentative, aimed at sharply limited objectives, little concerned with large-scale improvement, and always reverent to the past. And here undoubtedly he moves towards, yet

without actually crossing, the zero-line of complete scepticism. He does not reach the extreme position of that most brilliant of contemporary writers on political theory, Professor Michael Oakeshott; yet there is real kinship between them, and in his discussion of recent international relations Butterfield narrowly escapes the charge of Machiavellianism. One can so characterise providence in excess of reverence as to provoke men to a mad revolt against it. Of our three writers Butterfield has least sense of the weight and significance of the work of Immanuel Kant: and that perhaps is one of his most serious weaknesses.

But it is his last sentence, even his last words, that provoke the sharpest protest. Can a man, committed to Christ, be otherwise totally uncommitted? In those words he raises deepest issues of theology. His historical scepticism and detachment give the key to his meaning: yet unless I misunderstand them, Baillie and Niebuhr both say No. The latter is much nearer in a way to Butterfield than the former: but his Christ is too much an idea to be the focus of unconditional commitment. (In a way in his *Faith and History* he admirably illustrates what happens to Christology when one approaches its deeps from the analysis of justifying faith: what must Christ be like if he is to be posited as the objective correlate of this experience, this "posture under the sun" which outlines and outlasts so much that seems neater and more secure?) But Baillie's No is emphatic. In a way he says No simply because he is committed by charity to the task of communication, to the speaking to men and women in parables, suggested by their day to day predicaments, the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. He knows that despair does not lead to faith: that One once spoke of seven devils more wicked than the one cast out; perhaps both Djugashvili and Schickelgrüber are among their number. He bears witness to the fact that, unknown to themselves perhaps, many of the real evangelicals in Scotland to-day as well as the real theologians are in the Iona Community, facing the problem of communication.

Is this to affirm belief in progress valid simply because men have held it? Not at all. It is rather to try to view this tradition concretely in terms of the perplexities of flesh and blood men and women, in terms of their hopes and fears, against the background, too, of churches whose social witness so often takes to-day the shape of producing a fundamentally dishonest casuistry to justify genocidal warfare: the while often uncritically deploring "science" and all its works. It is even to suggest that we ought in our prayer, perhaps our fundamental Christian action, to measure the existential depth of such secular hope, trying to embrace it in charity *per Christum Dominum nostrum*. No-one has spoken recently more profoundly on the

resources of prayer in this connexion than Professor C. H. Dodd in his recent broadcasts on the Coming of Christ.[1] His sense of the transcendence of God is surer than that of any of our authors: and therefore he has the sense that maybe we co-operate the better with Him the more utterly we try ourselves in the situation in which we are placed, with all its strain pressing in on us, to lie open to His Spirit. He has a sure sense of the comings of Christ in the occasions of history: which makes history neither line, nor cycle, nor spiral, no—nor spinning into the abyss, but matter of divine redemption as well as of judgment.

All this of course is to go beyond any of our writers: it is to suggest perhaps the need of a new chapter in our ascetic theology, an ascetic of historical existence. Yet would not such be a valid contribution to the Christian understanding of history? Or do we think of the understanding as something over and done with, *datum* and not *dandum*, fit theme for Gifford or Warrack or Bampton lectures and not as something to which we are continually winning our way by compassion as well as by scholarship? If we do think so, I suggest we are greatly in error, our minds closed to the ultimate "ground of our beseeching", and to the workings of His Spirit.

Aberdeen May 1951 D. M. MACKINNON

The Glass of Vision. By AUSTIN FARRER. Dacre Press, Westminster, 1948. 12s. 6d. net.

THIS unusually slender volume of Bampton Lectures has a perfection of form which is not unconnected with its ascetic economy of words. The ear as well as the intellect is delighted and refreshed; but delighted with what is after all a single excellence—the perfect marriage of sound and sense. Would that every book of philosophical theology were an equal pleasure to read!

Dr Farrer's concern is with divine revelation, but with the form of revelation rather than with the content of it. He is disconcerted by the current tendency in non-Roman theological circles to depart from the traditional distinction between a natural and a revealed knowledge of God, and his book is essentially a defence, in the spirit of Thomism, of this distinction as against the lines of thought we associate with William Temple, Karl Barth, Martin Buber and the Christian "existentialists"—though few names are mentioned. The existentialists think of revelation as a "personal communication" from God to man. Dr Farrer asks what this means. "On the face of it, it suggests that God must speak to us somewhat as we speak to one another. But this obviously does not happen, nor is it going to happen. . . . I have a special and personal interest in challenging

[1] Recently published by the C.U.P.

the colloquy-form, because of an obstacle I remember encountering in my own adolescence. I had myself (this at least is the impression I retain) been reared in a personalism which might satisfy the most ardent of Dr Buber's disciples; . . . but neither out of the scripture I read nor in the prayers I tried to make did any mental voice address me: . . . no 'other' stood beside me, no shadow of presence fell upon me. I owe my liberation from this *impasse*, so far as I can remember, to reading Spinoza's *Ethics*. . . . And this is why, when Germans set their eye-balls and pronounce the terrific words 'He speaks to thee' (*Er redet dich an*), I am sure, indeed, that they are saying something, but I am still more sure that they are not speaking to my condition."

When he comes to speak more specifically of Scriptural revelation, Dr Farrer goes on to say that "we should like to attach ourselves to the thought of the ancient Church: but this, we are told, is just what we have not to do. For, it is said, pre-modern thought on the subject was vitiated by a single and cardinal false assumption —the assumption that revelation was given in the form of propositions." The new teaching is that revelation is given in the form of events; but "it does not seem that the theory of revelation by divine events alone is any more satisfactory than the theory of dictated propositions"; for "we cannot draw a hard distinction between the fact of Christ and the apostolic comment". At this point, however, Dr Farrer's criticism seems to be based on an *ignoratio elenchi*. The view followed by the school of thought which he is criticising is that revelation lies in "the coincidence of event and appreciation". These words are William Temple's, who further writes that God "guides the process: He guides the minds of men; the interaction of the process and the minds which are alike guided by Him is the essence of revelation" (*Nature, Man and God*, p. 312).

Dr Farrer then sets out his own view, which is, in a word, that revelation is given, not in the form of propositions, but in the form of images. "Divine truth is supernaturally communicated to men in an act of inspired thinking which falls into the shape of certain images." In reading the Scriptures the Medieval scholastic mind "was on the hunt for theological propositions, out of which a correct system of doctrine could be deduced by logical method", but a better way for theology is to determine the sense of the images contained in Scripture. "The images began to be given by Jesus Christ; the work was continued by the Spirit of Christ moving the minds of the Apostles. It was possible for Christ and the Apostles to use the images' meaning fully, because the old archetypes were there to hand, already half transformed under the leading of God in the expectant faith of Israel."

Dr Farrer has here made a real contribution. We must be very grateful to him for recalling us, both in this work and in his earlier book, *A Rebirth of Images*, to the part played in divine revelation by the great archetypal images of the faith. But surely he draws the line too sharply between images and propositional judgments. In the thought of St. Paul, for instance, the two are inextricably intermingled, and it is difficult to know why we should say that the former are any more the medium of revelation than the latter. Dr Farrer's reason for speaking thus of the images is apparently that he thinks the position he now adopts will obviate the objections felt against the view that revelation is given in the form of propositions. But it is difficult to see that this is the case. If the conception of direct personal address is rejected, as it is by Dr Farrer, the conception of revealed *truths* is then no more objectionable than the conception of revealed *images*.

"Theology", writes Dr Farrer, "is the analysis and criticism of the revealed images." The implication seems to be that in the doctrinal and propositional elements in the Bible there is a human element, and therefore an element of possible error, whereas the images are directly given by God. If this is the meaning, the difficulty suggests itself that both the images, and the propositional formulations, are attempts—though in neither case *unaided* attempts—on the part of fallible human minds to grasp the meaning of God's revelation of Himself; attempts, as it were, proceeding from two different activities of these minds, but one as fallible as the other. But perhaps Dr Farrer shelters himself under his statement: "I have heard it wisely said that in Scripture there is not a line of theology, and of philosophy not so much as an echo."

William Temple wrote that "What is offered to man's apprehension in any specific revelation is not truth concerning God, but the living God Himself" (op. cit., p. 322). We should be inclined to add, "And not images pointing to God, but the living God Himself." Yet in spite of Dr Farrer's objection to the thought of God's personal address to us, it would not be fair to conclude without quoting also his statements that "the primary revelation is Jesus Christ Himself"; that "the images themselves are not what is principally revealed; they are no more than the instruments by which realities are to be known"; and that, when he is asked "Does God feed his saints with nothing but figures of speech? Does he not also operate in their souls the supernatural action to which the figures refer?" such a question "does not admit of a yes-or-no answer".

John Baillie

Revelation and the Modern World. By L. S. Thornton. Dacre Press, 1950. 30s. net. pp. xx + 339.

Friedrich Schleiermacher made very little use of the concept of revelation. This was because the traditional distinction between a natural and a revealed knowledge of God, which had seemed so luminously clear to earlier ages, no longer seemed clear to him. He could accept neither the idea of an "unaided" speculative knowledge as worked out by the old natural theology, nor that of an authoritative communication of doctrinal truths as worked out by the old revealed theology, and in place of both he set a "religious consciousness" which might be regarded as mediating between them. The old conceptions which Schleiermacher criticised have never recovered their former prestige, yet the situation has now radically changed. The concept of revelation has in our own time come into its own again, though it is now not understood as consisting in propositional truth. Among the books which have contributed to this end may be mentioned William Temple's *Gifford Lectures*, the first volume of Barth's *Dogmatics*, Brunner's *Revelation and Reason*, Wheeler Robinson's *Redemption and Revelation*, Richard Niebuhr's *The Meaning of Revelation* and Austin Farrer's *The Glass of Vision*. To these must now be added Dr Thornton's substantial work.

Every reader of Dr Thornton's books must be impressed not only by their competence but by their real distinction, yet not all find it easy to learn from them. Some students find them most illuminating, while others find them very difficult indeed to assimilate —their minds seeming to work in a different way from his. In some ways the present is the easiest to read of all Dr Thornton's books, yet one is reluctantly forced to ask whether there is not about it a certain wordiness, and even an air of pedantry. Could not what he has to say have been said in less space, with less repetitiveness, and with a less formidable and annoying apparatus of cross-references; especially as this is but the first part of a two-volume treatise which, when completed, will apparently cost three pounds sterling?

The main thesis of the book may perhaps, without unfairness, be very simply stated. Traditional orthodoxy had tended towards a simple identification of revelation with the Bible. Liberalism had tried to discriminate: "It set out to preserve the unchanging essence of the biblical revelation", by distinguishing the core or essence of it from its temporal wrappings in the cultural forms and thought-processes of the ancient Eastern people to whom it was originally given. In doing this, "it too easily, and even naïvely, identified that essence with the contemporary philosophic idealism of western man". But its fundamental error lay not in this miscarrying of its endeavour, but in the very endeavour itself. The core cannot be distinguished

from its wrappings; "for without the external medium of presentation the revelation would simply disappear from our ken, as surely as in a modern scientific romance 'the invisible man' was no longer seen when he took off his clothes." Against all attempts "to distinguish the essence of revelation from the sacred literature in which it is enshrined" the objection must be urged that they "involve us in a process of discrimination by which we sit in judgment upon scripture and attempt to decide to what extent and in what degrees its various utterances are inspired." It follows that "Scripture as a whole is the Whole with which Revelation is to be identified". This sounds like fundamentalism, but Dr Thornton shows himself anxious, "in avoiding the Scylla of Liberalism . . . not to fall into the opposite error of bibliolatry or fundamentalism". For, though the outward form of revelation cannot be distinguished or separated (both words are used) from its essential content, yet "the scientific scrutiny of that outward form must be freely welcomed by the believer". "So far from hampering theological freedom", the recognition that "revelation is not separable from its outward form . . . secures for theology its necessary freedom." "Only so far as the outward form of revelation is vital to faith, can faith itself be subjected to that discipline of knowledge which is indispensable for its healthy functioning. If the outward form does not matter, faith can take refuge in an inner sanctuary to which the critical faculty cannot penetrate."

A brief review cannot do justice to the many interesting ways in which this thesis is worked out or to the other matters that are brought into relation to it; but there is something fine in the way that the involvement of revelation in the developing cultural forms of a particular epoch and people is shown to be of one piece with the incarnation of God in the flesh of the Man Jesus. *The Form of the Servant* is thus the general title of the two volumes of which this is the first.

The reader cannot but feel that, in the line of argument which Dr Thornton so assiduously follows, he is saying something important. Especially he is saying something which deserves to be noticed carefully by those interested in the controversy about "De-mythologising" (*Entmythologisierung*) which is at present being waged in continental Protestantism. Yet it must be confessed that he leaves us in the end not a little puzzled. That there are truths which cannot be grasped or expressed by us save in the form of a myth, and that in attempting to express them otherwise we either devitalise or pervert them, is familiar teaching enough. In these cases we can accept the myth as a myth, and as a myth which we cannot better. It seems quite otherwise, however, with (for example) the cosmo-

logical framework of an "up-and-down" universe in which the Biblical writers perforce did their thinking. This has not the character of a myth, which cannot be bettered, but of a scientific (or, if it be preferred, a pre-scientific) conception which is definitely an alternative to our own. Is the essence of the Christian revelation not separable, even in thought, from this? Is there no way of rather thinking together that essence with our own alternative conception? If not, what is to be our attitude to the older conception? Is Dr Thornton's only answer that we must not "sit in judgment upon scripture and attempt to decide to what extent and in what degree its various utterances are inspired"—and therefore to accept this also as plenary inspired truth? Or are we to rely rather on his other (and to all appearance alternative and irreconcilable) hint that "the scientific scrutiny of that outward form must be freely welcomed by the believer"?

No doubt Dr Thornton has his answer to these questions, but it is hard to believe that our failure to answer them for him, after reading his book, is due only to our own dullness of understanding. At the crucial point there is perhaps a failure on his part also—a failure to be sufficiently explicit, and especially a failure to illustrate his somewhat abstract and general statement by showing us how it would work out in a number of concrete examples such as that mentioned above.

JOHN BAILLIE

Tertullian's Treatise against Praxeas. The Text edited with an Introduction and Commentary by ERNEST EVANS. S.P.C.K. 21s.

TERTULLIAN's treatise against the Monarchians is the most important dogmatic work in Latin in the ante-Nicene period and this full edition of it will be welcomed by patristic scholars. Mr Evans has been particularly successful in dealing with the text. A corrupt manuscript tradition together with the inherent difficulty of Tertullian's style has tempted Kroymann and other modern editors into unrestrained conjectural emendation. The present editor adopts the sound principle of printing the manuscript text with some revision of the traditional punctuation and a minimum of emendation. and almost always he can make a convincing case for his decisions. If his restraint sometimes leads him to defend impossible readings such as *aut . . . aut* (*c.* 10, line 1) and *sonitu* (*c.* 20, line 4), that is a fault on the right side. Apart from an occasional lapse into cumbrous expression (e.g. *c.* 31, line 1), his translation reads well and reproduces something of the vigour of Tertullian's Latin.

A more qualified verdict must be passed on the theological intro-

duction and commentary. As a clergyman in charge of a remote country parish, Mr Evans has been unable to get access to many modern works on the history of dogma, and expresses the hope that enforced independent attention to the original documents may at least have saved him from the uncritical following of brilliant but misleading modern interpreters. There is much in his book which justifies this very proper hope. His notes show a fresh and first hand knowledge of Tertullian's use of words and technical terms, and there are some particularly good things in his introductory note on his author's theological terminology, where he effectively disposes of the view that it was largely dominated by legal ideas. But even here all is not satisfactory. The predominant meaning of *substantia* in Tertullian is hardly "a concrete individual thing" (p. 44). It is much more "the fundamental stuff" which anything is, its "irreducible constituent", as opposed to its activities and qualities (*natura*). Thus for Tertullian the divine substance is "spirit" just as man is two conjoined substances, *caro* and *anima*. In all the passages in which he uses the word "substance" of God or man it is possible and often necessary to interpret it by a concrete term. Briefly summarised, his doctrine of the divine being comes to this; that God is one spirit-stuff, internally and without division organised into three distinct persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with the proviso that this "economy" takes its origin from the Father, since He is *tota substantia*, whereas the Son (and presumably also the Spirit) is *derivatio totius et portio*, and so the ultimate unity is found within the being of the Father. In this last point Tertullian represents the prevailing tendency of ante-Nicene Trinitarian thought.

Mr Evans would disagree at least with some of the emphasis of this statement. He minimises or discounts altogether (pp. 53, 236) the materialistic implications of Tertullian's express affirmation that God is "spirit" and "spirit" is *corpus*. Of the significant word *portio* he is inclined to say (p. 247, but much more hesitatingly on p. 44) that it may mean "assignment" and not "part". Again he does less than justice to Tertullian's idea that the Son came to full birth, *perfecta nativitas*, only when God said, Let there be light, with its implications of a temporal aspect in the "economy". In short, the second century emerges from Mr Evans' treatment a little too tidy in its traditions and the African father a little too orthodox (in the fourth-century sense) in his teaching. Acquaintance with a critical historian of dogma, such as Loofs, might have led the editor to reconsider some of his verdicts.

Lack of critical approach also appears at some points in the historical introduction. Thus in the section on the Monarchian Controversy Mr Evans takes seriously what the fourth-century

fathers say of the teaching of Sabellius. In fact the only importance, dogmatic or otherwise, of Sabellius seems to be that he was the one modalist teacher who was excommunicated at Rome in the early third century. That explains why later eastern theologians found it convenient to make him the source of unacceptable views of the divine unity held by their contemporaries. Roman authors of the third century (Hippolytus, Novatian, Dionysius of Rome) all associate him with the simple identification of Christ and the Father, and never suggest that he taught any more elaborate doctrine. But Mr Evans has not observed that a more developed form of modalist theory (that in Jesus Christ the divine Christ is the Father and the human Jesus is the Son) was known not only to Tertullian (p. 316) but also to Hippolytus, who gives it as the teaching of the Roman bishop Callistus. Modalism was a wide-spread and popular view and it enjoyed official tolerance in Rome for at least the first two decades of the third century. The changed attitude implied by the treatise of the Roman presbyter Novatian about A.D. 250 must have been brought about largely by the works of the two remarkable schismatics, Tertullian and Hippolytus, the second of whom, as Mr Evans observes, probably learnt something from the first.

The present commentary in its ample and lucid notes makes clear Tertullian's linguistic usage and the course of his argument with the help of well-chosen material from his other works and from other authors. But the agility of the eye and hand of the reader is severely taxed by the separate printing of the text, the translation and the commentary, and in the commentary the notes have no page references. When Mr Evans fulfils his promise to edit the *de Anima* and other treatises of Tertullian, as we hope he will, perhaps he will at least give the text and translation on opposite pages.

H. J. CARPENTER

Problems of Reunion. By A. E. J. RAWLINSON. Eyre and Spottiswoode. 9s.

OUR generation has seen many books on the subject of reunion, but this is one that is more than a book, for in it the hand of reconciliation is definitely and sincerely held out by a prominent Anglican, the Bishop of Derby, to other Churches. It is a powerful work which, besides presenting its theological argument in a clear and even exciting way, succeeds in evoking penitence, and stirring the conscience as few publications of this kind actually do. Here is a most earnest attempt to reach understanding by one who is able to appreciate the other point of view and who is prepared for a sincere give-and-take in the urgent duty of reunion without in any way sacrificing principle or glossing over real differences. It will be

welcomed in ecumenical endeavour everywhere, but particularly by those who are engaged in friendly discussions in our own country, and who are concerned not merely with concrete proposals for reunion but with the profound theological questions which are thus raised.

In a striking preface Dr Rawlinson points out that divisions or schisms between Christians are to be taken as discords within the family of the Church which is as widespread as Christendom. But to adopt this view that schism is within the Church, and not from the Church (which is apostasy), is to take up a position the effect of which is to include all Christians, of whatever "Church" or ecclesiastical allegiance, under sin. Reconciliation therefore must be pursued with a deep sense of sin and shame, and with sincere contrition and forgiveness on both sides, although ecclesiastical and theological divergences must be taken seriously. That will not be easy, and so the Bishop of Derby suggests that "for a considerable period yet there may well be continuing need for the work of theologians, whose vocation and duty it is so to converse on these high matters across the ecclesiastical frontiers as in very truth to reach out towards fuller understanding, purging themselves in the process mutually of error, learning best how to correct false emphases, renewing lost insights and in humility finding the way, by God's grace, to recovered balance of truth and wholeness of catholicity."

After a helpful opening chapter on the Church and the Churches, Dr Rawlinson goes on to state the position of the Church of England. That is not easy to do, for the Church of England has nowhere formulated her position clearly in these matters—which is perhaps her greatest handicap in ecumenical discussions, while at the same time it leaves the door open for Churchmen to imply that their own views are those of their Church. There can be little doubt that the statement of the position of the Church of England given here admirably represents the views of many of our Anglican contemporaries; but it would appear to me that although he is trying to be fair and is anxious not to be biased Dr Rawlinson underestimates the Lutheran and Calvinist influence upon the Church of England. Certainly he has the courage to state the plain fact that "the Church of England itself, as a reformed Church, broke continuity in the sixteenth century with the Church system of which it had until then been a part: that is, it reformed itself at the cost of schism" (p. 36)—although it retained institutional continuity in the episcopate (at least on the Anglican, if not on the Roman claim). At the same time much that is said here about the Anglican Reformation will be challenged by others in the same Church who have a fuller sympathy for the heritage of the Reformation.

This raises a point of supreme importance which must be faced sooner or later by those who lead the Church of England in her task of reunion. How are other Churches to understand the position of the Church of England, and to take their measure of Anglican teaching? By trying to get a general concensus of Anglican thought to-day, by studying the *Doctrinal Report of the Church of England* (which God forbid!), by seeking to estimate the predominant tradition in the last hundred years, or by assessing the theological position of the Church of England throughout the four hundred years of her life since the Reformation? One fact is perfectly plain, that on the whole many leading Anglicans to-day appear to shut their eyes to the three hundred years of Anglican tradition before the Tractarian movement, or if they do not shut their eyes altogether to that great tradition, they read it and often misread it in the light of current prejudices. No one who has examined the *Thirty-Nine Articles* and noted that its doctrine of the Church is literally Lutheran, its doctrine of justification Calvinist, or examined the *Ordinal* only to discover that this, which was to a large measure the work of Martin Bucer of Strasburg, has a non-sacerdotal view of the ministry, or remembers that the King at the head of the Church of England has vowed to defend the Protestant Reformed Religion, can but wonder whether after all those Anglican Churchmen who stress their "catholic" character are not really disavowing a great deal of their own great tradition.

Where does the Church of England stand to-day? Does she still hold with Hooker that ordination without a Bishop is sometimes to be allowed, as when God extraordinarily raises up a Reformer, or with Archbishop Laud who wrote: "Much evident it is, that the 'succession' which the Fathers meant, is not tied to place or person, but is tied to 'verity of doctrine'. . . . So that if the doctrine be no kin to Christ all the 'succession' become strangers, what nearness soever they pretend of"? Does the Church of England still agree with the position adopted by representative divines like Cousin and Mason, or agree with the verdict of at least (as numbered by H. H. Henson) seventeen Archbishops and forty-six Bishops (including many whose works are in the Anglo-Catholic Library) who admitted the validity of Presbyterian orders? Does the Church of England repudiate to-day two significant moments in her relations with Scotland when in 1610 and 1661 at her advice the Scottish Episcopal Church accepted a whole clergy in Presbyterian orders, *without reordination*, while she herself entered into full communion with the episcopalised Church of Scotland in *that* condition? There can be no doubt that the other Churches with which the Church of England discusses reunion want from the Church of England a plain and un-

ambiguous answer to questions like these, an answer which takes into account the *whole* of her tradition, and not one which expresses the views of a minority at one period in Anglican history. There is, for example, little point in asserting that there is no particular theory of episcopacy the acceptance of which is obligatory in Anglicanism (p. 53), if at the same time the Bishop of Derby insists that in discussions on reunion an episcopate would have to be accepted, capable of being interpreted in the form which stricter Anglicans hold it (p. 57, but cf. p. 168 f.). So long as the Church of England allows a small if powerful minority to hold a pistol to the whole tradition of the Church of England ranging over four hundred years, serious hopes of reconciliation cannot be entertained. It is with the Church of England, not with the straitest sect within the Church of England, that we wish to discuss reunion.

Although we may complain that even the Bishop of Derby's sincere and unprejudiced discussion has not done justice to vast stretches of Anglican history, we are none the less grateful to him for powerful contributions to questions of the hour. He has given us a penetrating critique of that notorious book, *The Apostolic Ministry*, and has replaced the question of continuity in the corporate setting which it always had in the Church of England until the Tractarians, to the horror of High Churchmen and Low Churchmen alike, sought to isolate the episcopate from the whole continuing body of the Church and to rest continuity on it alone. Most Anglicans then felt that such an idea struck at the root not only of the essential unity in continuity of Church and community and doctrine for which the Church of England had always stood, but it struck at the root of her teaching on the corporate priesthood of the whole Church as the Body of Christ. Thus even a man like Laud had earlier insisted that the real continuity of the Church rested upon baptismal incorporation into the Body of Christ rather than upon a line of priestly succession, important as he felt that to be. This is the direction in which the thought of Dr Rawlinson moves, though one would like to push it even further. Advocates of episcopacy in its Anglican form have yet to advance a single and truly theological reason why the corporate episcopate *must devolve upon individuals only*. Presbyterians do not think that in the nature of the case this can be done, but they on their part have not to my knowledge offered a single purely theological reason why the corporate episcopate, which they hold as firmly as Anglicans, *may not devolve upon individual men*. However, it is precisely this *individualism* in the notion of the episcopate, an individualism made essential (the dotted line of the succession of Bishops as opposed to the real continuity of the whole Body), which Presbyterians find questionable, and difficult as a *de*

fide matter. Presbyterianism stands for a doctrine of the ministry as the expression of the corporate priesthood of the Body of Christ, and of collegiate courts as the expression of the corporate episcopate of the Church.

The whole notion of validity is also discussed in a fresh and illuminating manner in these pages. "The question may be seriously raised", says Dr Rawlinson, "as to whether the traditional doctrine of validity, developed and formulated in days prior to the Reformation and reflecting inevitably an outlook for which Protestantism as yet did not exist, may not need to be thought out afresh, and with greater realism, in relation to the much more complex ecclesiastical situation of to-day" (p. 61 f.). Following a line suggested by the Bishop of Oxford (without however falling into his shocking position which really holds admittedly efficacious acts of the Holy Ghost to be invalid), the Bishop of Derby points the way to a view of the validity of orders in relation to a divided Christendom as being, in an important sense, a matter of degree. Without doubt this is a line that will prove helpful and profitable, though at its deepest level it still leaves untouched the question whether any juridical notion, which validity inevitably involves, is compatible with faith in the Holy Ghost.

When we turn to questions of Intercommunion and Christian Initiation we find a candid discussion of confirmation. It is admitted that upon the origin of Laying on of Hands, as a rite associated or linked with Baptism, the New Testament throws no light at all, and it is insisted that teaching about confirmation should not be such as to lead to the disparagement of Baptism, and that indeed episcopal confirmation should not be pressed as indispensable in talks on reunion. This is most wise and salutary, for it has seemed evident again and again to many outside the Church of England that exclusively episcopal confirmation interpreted as the completion of Baptism, leads straight to a usurpation of lordship over the Eucharist, lordship which by right belongs to Christ alone. Once episcopal confirmation is exalted to the function of completing Baptism and Holy Communion is thus brought under the exclusive control of the Bishop, the problem of intercommunion is created which ought not to be there at all. Let it be said here quite bluntly that the problem of intercommunion is quite a false problem and those who have created it bear before God the responsibility of removing it from the face of the Church. Dr Rawlinson, however, has pointed a way to a deeper and a more Biblical understanding of Baptism as the full act of the Spirit whereby we are incorporated into the Body of Christ (though he does not seem to recall that the Fathers, Athanasius for example, regarded Baptism as itself *teleiosis*,

cf. p. 122). But that makes the question of intercommunion all the more acute. Who has the authority to deny those already fully incorporated into the Body of Christ the right to feed on that Body? And who dares to partake of the Eucharist in such a way as not to welcome all who are admittedly incorporated through Baptism into the Body of Christ, that is to say, in such a way as not to discern the Lord's Body? It is for this cause, St. Paul reminded the Corinthians, that many were weak and sickly among them—and may that not be equally true of us to-day? Dr Rawlinson realises the gravity of such questions when he declares that in coming negotiations between Anglicans and non-Anglicans with a view to reunion the questions about Baptism implicitly posed by Tertullian will have to be faced (p. 142).

One further point we may notice here—the prominence of the questions of priesthood and sacrifice in recent Anglican thought. Once again we are reminded of the teaching of Hooker that as sacrifice is now no part of the ministry of the Church of England, the priesthood must be understood accordingly, in a non-sacerdotal sense. Even when the classical High Anglicans of the seventeenth century spoke of Eucharistic sacrifice it is clear that they were speaking of it in much the same way as Peter Martyr in his debates at Oxford with Gardiner and Tresham, drawing from his great patristic learning on this question. Sacrifice and priesthood are essentially ambiguous terms and cannot be used univocally of Christ and His Church. The prime question to be faced here is this: how can the Eucharist be an offering of that which by its very nature was done in our stead and on our behalf? It is without doubt an *echo* of the one all-sufficient sacrifice of Him who eternally intercedes for us before the Father, but the Eucharistic sacrifice is not *identical* with that as such. There is a great deal of confusion here which can only be straightened out when Anglicans are prepared to think their Christology and their soteriology more carefully into their doctrine of the Sacraments, while many who hold the doctrine of the Eucharistic sacrifice in the Anglo-Catholic form ought to be frank enough to acknowledge, like Darwell Stone in the 1927 volume of the Anglo-Catholic Congress (in which Dr Rawlinson also has a contribution), that here they are taking up "a different position from that of the long succession of great and good men in the English Church". Meantime, I cannot think that the Bishop of Derby really helps matters by the idea that "It is the Last Supper which makes Calvary sacrificial" (p. 133). Surely what *made* Calvary sacrificial, if we are to use these terms, was the self-offering of Christ in Gethsemane, His will to lay down His life freely. It is entirely a Latin and indeed an artificial idea to understand liturgical *sacrificium* as

making something different. Far better were it for Anglicans to return to the teaching of their own great Caroline divines!

This review has been somewhat critical for I have dealt wth several of the salient points which raise questions in the minds of non-Anglicans, but let it be said that this is a work which non-Anglicans must study carefully, for it has a great deal to say to them which will be wholesome and which ought to stimulate a penitential rethinking of their own historical traditions in several respects. After reading this book several times I for one am convinced that our theological thinking together must be conducted at a much profounder level than hitherto, and am sure therefore that the recommendation of the *Joint Report on Relations between the Church of Scotland and the Church of England* is perfectly right—that as well as a short-term policy a *long-term policy* should be adopted, in which representatives of both Churches will be able to go into the whole matter on a deeply theological basis and which will allow time for the theological discussions and conclusions of the conferences, published from time to time, to react upon both Churches with a view to drawing them as a whole into a penitential rethinking of our historical achievements and into a consideration before God of such moderations of our respective traditions as will bring us at last to sit down together at the Holy Table and be healed of our divisions.

T. F. Torrance

The Biblical Doctrine of the Church. By William Robinson. The Bethany Press, St. Louis, Missouri. $2.50.

This is undoubtedly one of the most able and helpful works on Biblical theology that has appeared in recent years, remarkable both for its profound understanding of the Biblical outlook and for an exposition which cuts cleanly through the present debate on the nature of the Church. The work has been written with the aim of helping forward the work of understanding between Protestants and Catholics which, Dr Robinson holds, is necessary to the emergence of the *una sancta*, which in our day is most desirable, not only because the Lord wills it, but because without it the world can hardly be saved from perishing. No one who reads and studies this book will fail to realise that Dr Robinson has gone far in the fulfilment of his aim, nor will anyone put it down without being deeply grateful.

The present situation in regard to the doctrine of the Church is set forth in this way: "If Protestants have been apt, in the nine-

teenth century and later on, to divide between the gospel and the church, it is equally true that Catholics, since the fifth century, have tended to divide between the hierarchy and the church. Nevertheless, these past thirty years have seen a shifting of the emphasis in both cases to the recovery of *biblical* theology among both Catholic and Protestant scholars. This recovery of biblical theology has meant that Protestants have become more conscious of the origins of their witness in the classical Protestantism of the sixteenth century, and Catholics, in the same way, have become more conscious of the springs of their origin in the Patristic age of the first four centuries, before declension set in. The result has been to narrow the gulf which separates the essential Catholicism from essential Protestantism. It is doubtful whether, on the doctrine of the church, anything like the chasm separates them which it was supposed existed. Protestants have seen quite clearly that neither the Bible nor classical Protestantism knows anything of Christianity without the church, while Catholics are beginning to realise the danger of substituting a 'high-clericalism' for the 'high-churchism' of the Bible and of Primitive Catholicism" (p. 189 f.).

In this situation Dr Robinson has sought to intervene by a realistic study of the Biblical teaching which he gives us in the earlier chapters of this work. With great clarity and conviction he elucidates the point that the necessity and nature of the Church are grounded in the fact of revelation itself or the showing forth or epiphany of the nature and character of God on the plane of history. "Revelation, in the biblical sense, is the unfolding of the 'hidden secret' through the gracious activity of God—something *done* in the realm of *fact*, something objectively set forth, a sure word of God. In nature God is not necessarily seen as personal, nor is the world seen as ordered fellowship. The secret is never wholly revealed. In revelation, however—in the word of God in its manifoldness, first acted and spoken and finally 'made flesh'—the truth that fellowship is the structure of reality is completely set forth" (p. 18). It is thus that the nature of the Church is revealed as historical reality, representing "that point in the creative and redemptive activity of God where he is revealed; and as such it is a continuation of that process of his showing forth of himself which was begun when the word 'was in the world . . . yet the world knew him not'. The church is a supernatural society within a natural environment—'a colony of heaven', as Paul called it" (p. 103).

It is significant that Principal Robinson has traced this Biblical teaching about the Church throughout the New Testament—the Gospels, the Johannine and Pauline literature, as also in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in 1 Peter and in the Apocalypse. This has been

done with great power and acumen in a way that will commend the exposition both to New Testament scholars and to theologians. There will doubtless be ready agreement that in the NT the Church is held to be God's gift to man, and as such is an abiding reality with historical continuity. But how is this continuity maintained? That is the great question of the hour where the differences are still acute. In his last two chapters particularly Dr Robinson tries to make some contribution towards the removal of those differences. And we must grant him a great measure of success.

Here is his own estimate of his contribution: "I have tried to show that neither indifference to questions of order and structure (often rightly, I think, ascribed to Protestant thought and practice), nor overzealous pleading for the acceptance of rigid, legal, and almost mechanical forms of structure (often, I am afraid, the attitude of Catholics), can get us very far, if any distance at all. From the Protestant side, we may not accept as true a doctrine which appears to be a contradiction of the very nature of the church, and of the gospel which reveals the church as part of the 'good news' in Christ Jesus. The Catholic is equally concerned that we should not be indifferent to, nor set ourselves in opposition to, those forms of the church which it has pleased God in his wisdom to reveal to us. He should understand, however, that the real difficulty in accepting the rigid theory of apostolic succession, from the Protestant side, is not indifference to forms. It is something much deeper. If God is personal, and if he has chosen to deal *personally* with his children, being the Father of his family, it ill becomes us to attempt to hedge him in with *legal* restrictions, which would seem to be foreign to the way of his dealing with his children. Likewise the Protestant should understand that the concern of the Catholic for form and structure in the church is dictated neither by his love of exclusiveness nor by mere antiquarianism. It, also, is something much deeper. If God, in his personal dealing with man, reaches down to us in the limitations of our historical existence, in the Person of his Son, taking on the 'form of a servant', we cannot be wholly indifferent to the 'form' which the church, the body of Christ, must take in history, setting spirit against matter and function against form in a way which is decidedly unbiblical. Understanding each other at this deeper level, we leave the area of controversy and enter that of conference where partisanship and a sense of superiority are banished and only truth prevails" (pp. 191 f.).

The whole book is written in the same irenic spirit, though the author is not slow to point out the glaring *non-sequiturs* in the argument of Father Hebert or to point out how the teaching of Dom Gregory Dix at significant points argues for the other side of the

debate. Now and then, indeed, one must differ from Dr Robinson's argument too, but it is a pleasure to read and re-read a work which commends itself all along the line by conspicuous fairness and sincerity and compels such a measure of assent. Here we are given a very powerful and convincing account of the historical continuity of the Church as lodged essentially in the Church as the Body of Christ, and not in a hierarchy that is set over against the Church, a notion which the theory of rigid apostolic succession demands. One of the most illuminating things about this book is the way in which the author expounds the great mystery that Christ and His Church are one and shows that it is upon this Biblical doctrine that the rigid view of the Church as historical structure becomes shipwreck. The historical structure of the Church can only be analogous to the living Body of Christ.

One would have welcomed from Principal Robinson at this very point, where the doctrine of Christ and the doctrine of the Church overlap, a fuller theological discussion of the essential duality which the enmeshment of the Church in history involves. *Christologically*, this is the duality between the divine and the human in the Church, the two natures in one body, as Dr Robinson puts it—though perhaps it ought to have been made more clear that the *divine* nature of the Church must be defined in terms of the divine-human person of Christ. "In reality, the church is Christ manifest in the flesh, as Jesus of Nazareth was God manifest in the flesh" (p. 101). *Eschatologically*, however, there is a duality between the Church as the Body of the risen and glorified Lord and the Church as the Body of Christ still in the likeness of sinful flesh—the Church in history is still *peccator* though *justus*. The NT tells us on the one hand that the Church is already the Body of Christ, but on the other hand it tells us that we must still wait for the redemption of the body. These two facts are not unconnected (cf. p. 70 f.), for while the Church is the Body of Christ in a once-and-for-all sense through baptismal incorporation, the Church must continue to become the Body of Christ through Eucharistic communion in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It seems to be right here that the Biblical teaching is so relevant that the Church is the Bride of Yahweh or the Bride of the Lamb (cf. p. 72 f.). In the continuity of history the Church exists in the likeness of sinful flesh, but even as such the Church is the Bride whom Christ has purchased by His blood and made His own in a betrothal which is sealed in holy Baptism. This same Bride redeemed out of sin is yet to be presented to Christ as a chaste virgin at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Until then the Church has the holy Eucharist ("an antepast of the Lamb's Bridal Feast", p. 73) through which she is given in

anticipation communion in that ultimate mystery of oneness with her Lord. As long as the Church partakes of the Eucharist in history, however, she is reminded that she exists now only in the form of a servant, in the form of humiliation, yet with the promise that the Lord will change her vile body and make it like unto His glorious Body. All this has profound consequences for the *form* of the Church, as even a Roman Catholic theologian like Eugen Walter (cf. *Das Kommen des Herrn*) realises acutely. It means that as long as the Church exists in history she participates in the forms of the cosmos which must pass away before the final judgment, so that the *form* that the Church assumes in the cosmos is essentially ambiguous. It is this doctrine of the ambiguity of form that the Reformation understood so profoundly and expressed in its doctrine of *imputation*, which both the Roman Church and modern Protestantism have so fatally misunderstood. It is just at this point (justification eschatologically understood) that Luther and Calvin saw that the doctrines of Christ and the Church overlapped and interpreted each other.

I must not close this review without saying again how grateful we are to Dr William Robinson for an extremely illuminating and stimulating discussion which has gone far to break down the differences that divide our views on the doctrine of the Church to-day. It is to our great loss but to the gain of the U.S.A. that he has now left Overdale College, Selly Oak, where he has so long been the honoured Principal. We extend to him through the pages of this Journal the good wishes of all who study and learn from his writings.

T. F. Torrance

Recent French Theological Periodicals

The most recent issue of the well-known and admirable *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses* (published quarterly by the Faculty of Protestant Theology of the University of Strasbourg), No. 1 of 1951, is devoted to a republication of Bucer's Brief Résumé of the Doctrine of the Christian Religion. Alongside of this M. François Wendel, who edits the work, supplies a French translation, for which his humble claim is, not that it betters the original, but that it renders in another language the development of Bucer's ideas and the movement of his thoughts, with a minimum of evidently necessary amendments.

This Summary of the Faith is a valuable document in itself, and, dated 1548, emerges from the bedrock foundations of the Reformed Faith. The majority of the inhabitants of Strasbourg who favoured the Reformation, viewed with distaste the attempt of the Emperor Charles V to impose the so-called *Interim* settlement. Despite two

concessions made to the Lutherans, the permission of marriage to priests, and the participation of the Communion in both kinds, they suspected, with the restoration of the rights of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the eventual restoration of the Roman cult. Sturm, protagonist of the dissatisfied elements, decided that the combat must be continued. Sturm was reconciled to the view that "it cannot be expected that all will abandon this world for love of Christ; this is the affair of a minority whom God has chosen to this end". The effect of his intervention was a promised resumption of negotiations with Charles V.

A Summary of Articles taught and publicly preached was prepared to combat the doctrine of the *Interim*. This Summary, though accused of anabaptist doctrine and with inciting civic disobedience, in fact contained passages in which obedience to the authorities is enjoined. Recourse was had finally to arbitration, and in Strasbourg the Bishop received the custody of the Cathedral and three other Churches, while the Protestant cult continued to be celebrated in the other parish Churches of the city.

Shortly after, there was circulated in the city a pamphlet directed against the pastors, whose authorship remained obscure. This document charged the pastors once again with anabaptist sympathies; but its lasting significance was more adventitious: it called forth from Bucer a retort which he gave to the world under the title of *Ein Summarischer Vergriff der Christlicher Lehre und Religion.*

Here is Bucer's theological testament, his thought in its last stage. M. Wendel's introduction remarks on the reduced emphasis upon the great dogmatic problems. Predestination itself receives only brief mention, while sanctification and the works consequent upon it pass into primary place. Bucer insists indeed on man's incapacity to do good and his absolute dependence on divine grace. But he lays emphasis on the role of good works which are indicative of true faith and depend on our free will inspired by the Holy Spirit. "One is here very near Melanchthonian synergism." But Bucer seems to pass over these questions in haste, in order to insist upon the means of sanctification, which he finds in the Church, in the Sacraments, and in discipline. The visible Church is for Bucer a living reality, the reality in whose presence the Christian finds his place in the accomplishment of his task. Here are the familiar themes of his theology: the Church as the Body of Christ and the instrument of sanctification; the diversity of ministries; the function of the Sacraments and especially of the Holy Communion as commemoration of the death of our Lord and as the means of perfecting our union with Him; the emphasis finally he places on penitential discipline without which no true Church is possible.

It may be hoped that this reproduction will make available for many a treatise without which a library of early Protestant doctrine would be incomplete.

The *Bulletin trimestriel* de la Faculté libre de Théologie protestante de Paris, dated May 1951, has reached us. It contains an assessment of the relationship between "Renan et le Protestantisme" contributed by George Marschal, pastor of the Église du Foyer de l'Âme in Paris. He begins by enumerating four factors which contributed to the interest which Renan always manifested toward Protestantism. There was an "epochal reason"—Renan lived in an epoch when Protestantism was in favour; a family reason—marriage gave Renan entry into a notable Protestant connexion; an intellectual reason—himself already accomplished in exegesis, he became the admirer and friend of German and French reformed exegetes; a spiritual reason—Protestantism necessarily presented itself as a live option to one who on historical grounds renounced Romanism.

Renan's attitude to Protestantism, though appreciative, is compounded of diverse and often apparently conflicting strains. He generously values the spiritual continuity which binds Protestantism to St. Paul: "the illustrious founder of this religion is St. Paul; Protestantism already existed five years after the death of Jesus, when St. Paul offers the first example of a Christian who received his faith, not as by the spoken word of a superior, but as a conviction personally created." But Renan himself remained Roman in sympathy at this point: "he never understood or loved St. Paul."

Renan, our writer suggests, was Barthian, at least in the sense that he understands that antinomies exist: "reality is not logical and it continually baffles reason"; and, while one must not invoke antinomies at every point, Renan feels that Calvin has for the sake of system too "rigorised" the New Testament texts. Renan never underestimated the importance of the Reformers: "*A priori*, they were no theorists of freedom in believing; but *a posteriori*, the doctrinal presuppositions of the Reformation led to freedom, whether of Biblical criticism, ecclesiastical organisation, or even civil polity." He rightly regarded Protestantism as of the prophetic rather than the sacerdotal school, and held the sixteenth century to be the heir of the eighth century B.C., the latest offspring of the school of Isaiah. He considered Protestantism to be the religion of the future, if only it would remain true to its principles, especially in the acceptance of a free religion, the practice of frank examination of the texts, and the rejection of every vestige of that mythological method which his own Amiel designated as "dramaturgie semitique". Yet he could not repress the suspicion that Protestantism had parted with

joy; for "even under its formal liberalism, it places at the centre of its system the problem of evil, that is to say sin and salvation". There is little doubt, as our author remarks, that here Renan is influenced by a certain Roman eudaemonism, which disabled him from appreciating the true joy which comes, as in Luther, from the sense of victory over evil.

Perhaps *the* problem of Protestant Dogmatics, as Renan saw, was the problem of the grounds of truth, or in other words the relation of metaphysics with history. Christian truth, which is theologically expressed in doctrines, rests on the facts and the promises found in the Gospel. One seems then to be required to rest *absolute* truth upon the *relative* results of historical inquiry. Romanism finds refuge here in the infallibility of Scripture as interpreted by the Church, Protestantism in the internal witness of the Holy Spirit. But each answer seems to involve a vicious circle: the Roman, because scripture is adduced to guarantee the infallibility of the Church; Protestantism, because it argues thus: the Scriptures can only be understood through the Holy Spirit, but the ground of this principle is to be found in Holy Scripture itself. Renan feared that traditionalism in Protestantism might gain the upper hand: "The hour was favourable to Protestantism, but by fault of the conservative elements, the hour had been allowed to slip past."

Hence arose in Renan's mind a disquiet concerning the future of all professed forms of Christianity. He loved the Gospel, but doubted whether "the pure Gospel" corresponded to any comprehensible historical reality. The "golden age" is for him a Protestant myth, if Protestantism hoped to discover there the norm for doctrines of which the first century had not so much as thought.

The author of this article expresses doubt whether, however true it may be, all this is the last word in the matter. "The pure Gospel" is accessible by internal proofs of a spiritual kind, which alone, *par choc en retour*, yield a kind of external proof. This, so long as we wait to "know even as also we are known", is all that we can reasonably expect.

When all is said, Renan "at fundamental points, did not wish to be regarded as a Christian". Above all, this *grand érudit* balked at the thought and idea of immortality. Yet he himself, as our author concludes, "seemed to take precautions against the pitiless exposition of his own thought, when he said to his daughter: 'Believe, you must believe in eternal life—even if my writings are quoted in a contrary sense.' "

Three issues (but four numbers) of the *Études théologiques et religieuses*, publication of the Faculty of Protestant Theology, Montpellier, have appeared during the past twelve months: No. 3 and 4

of 1950, and, in accordance with the capricious but intriguing French fashion of enumeration, a third issue which comprises Nos. 1 and 2 of 1951. The first and last of these issues are each devoted to a single theme, Baptism and Holy Communion respectively. The last issue of 1951 offers more diverse fare. It opens with a gracious memorial to the late Theo Preiss, until his death in August 1950 the Editor of this review.

Georges Crispy who succeeds to the Redaction contributes an article, "Que peut être actuellement une Psychologie religieuse?" He avers at the outset that the whole subject emerged as a live issue in French theology forty years ago, when Henri Bois characterised William James' famous Gifford Lectures on this theme, then ten years old, and for four years in French translation, as "an event as happy for the scientific world as for the religious". A curious revulsion of opinion took place, however, and fifteen years later research into religious psychology was held to be evidence of a retrograde and heretical spirit. This study examines the reasons for this astonishing check to an inquiry which made so promising a début. The writer sees the influence of Starbuck and of Freud fateful at this point, in that they diverted attention with unjust emphasis to the social factors which with James found less favour ("We confine ourselves to the intimate religious experience which is born, expands and dies within a personal consciousness").

M. Crispy's conclusion is unambiguous: there is a rightful place for this science within the Christian faith and life. "It justifies its existence in the Church, by the programme which it sets itself: to prepare and maintain in each man the pathways for his King." What lies between the beginning and this conclusion merits the close attention of all concerned with practical theology.

The practical nuance of this article finds an almost dramatic foil in the one that follows: "Le Début, la Suite et la Fin d'un Sermon", a homiletic study by Eduard Thurneysen, translated from the German. Those familiar with the standpoint of the venerable minister of the Basler Dom will not find that his views have altered. He begins by asking whether Pascal was *homiletically* right when he said: "The last thing one discovers in composing a work is to know what ought to be put first." In composing a sermon should the beginning be held up in suspense until the end appears?

Dr Thurneysen suggests that, whatever be the right way to make a beginning on a secular occasion, different factors and categories come into operation when the composition is a sermon. Many sermons, he alleges, only prove that the preacher is a rambler, who "does not succeed in plunging from the very first phrase into the reality of the text, to address himself to his audience and impart

this reality". Instead of this, the preacher too often builds "long ramps of access", takes time to make points of contact, and loses himself in lengthy detours in order the better to arrive at the text. All this, as we might expect, is severely deprecated. "It is the Word of God which is announced and the advent of a new glorious world which comes from God to men." From the first phrase, therefore, one must preach a thing novel and unique, the mighty Word of our God, pure grace and promise, a *verbum alienum* which alone saves and delivers.

This is why "Introductions" are wrong, why points of interest and attempts to secure attention are false. Cicero's famous word, cited by both St. Augustine and Luther, is quoted: "The beginning must always be to render the mind of the hearer ready to listen to us" and so on. But the special case of the sermon requires a special application of this rubric. It is not by devious detours that the mind of the worshipper is rendered ready, but by genuinely Biblical beginning.

It is indeed necessary that general announcements be made to the congregation, as in the case of the German Confessional Church. But even these should be made preferably at the beginning of the Sermon, and in any case clearly separated from the proclamation of the Word. The Sermon must in every case begin with the presentation of the text in all its power and grandeur. Pascal's rule is in this sense to be taken seriously.

The writer holds that particular attention is also rightly given to the conclusion: "From the point of departure, the preacher ought internally to know the *terminus ad quem*." But it must be one which, like the beginning, arises out of the text itself. For this reason, a concluding "appeal to the audience" is deprecated, as is also the familiar homiletic practice of "final application". But the ground adduced is a sound one: Exposition is only true exposition when it, phrase by phrase, is its own application. No separation of the two is permissible: "If one separates application from explication, all is lost." "The Law is not a second reality alongside the Gospel. The Gospel always presents itself under the form of command. This is why it is impossible to proclaim the Gospel to a man without confronting him at the same time with its urgency, without placing him under the Commandment."

Preaching is "to make the text itself speak, in the manner most natural, and with a movement of thought appropriate to it. Hence a "systematic résumé" is a false conclusion, emanating from a false view of what a sermon is. Because it is the will of God that reaches us in His Word, the conclusion will lead to prayer and praise, and ought not to be "coiffeured" with a doxology of the preacher's own composition.

As for the course of the Sermon, it and the conclusion must naturally condition each other. It is not determined by constraint or artifice, but unfolds itself with suppleness and a certain liberty. All depends upon whether it is the course of the text that really carries us along.

An admirable sentiment is quoted from the youthful Luther, and deserves repetition here since it bears appositely on the subject. Addressing the venerable Lord Georges Kunzelt at Eilenburg, he says: "What you desire to know about the correct manner of beginning and of ending a sermon, does not accord with the practice of the world. In fact I leave alone all lengthy preambles and content myself with saying briefly: so that the Word of God be profitable to us and agreeable to God, let us invoke forthwith His divine grace, while you say from the bottom of your heart an Ave Maria or a Pater Noster. Immediately after, I announce the text without indicating any kind of theme, and I expound David or whatever it is, and I explicate the doctrines it contains. At the end I speak thus: This is enough for us!; or: Let us see what follows another time!; or: We have said enough, let us go on to ask grace from God to act in such a manner; or, again: God help us in this matter. I then add briefly: Let us pray for men in every condition, spiritual or temporal, and especially, etc. For these and for all, sinners as we are we will pray together, Our Father, etc. Amen. This is my method as preacher" (15th June 1520).

Preaching is the communication of something committed to us. "It is to transmit it in a living way, with all the force at my command, but really to *transmit* it." To put confidence in all sorts of devices, rhetorical, psychological, and liturgical, is a caricature of Roman preaching, which, while it degenerates into moral and philosophical homily, at least has the Mass behind it. To-day we must return to the preaching of our forebears, in recovering once again our confidence in the Word of God in Scripture, in a new way appropriate to our new situation indeed, but with the same fidelity and the same assurance.

Comment on this notable contribution would rightly run to a greater length than is here permissible. Something of the majesty of preaching receives noble expression. There is so much truth here, said in such shrill tones. It is beyond all controversy the kind of thing that all divinity students, and all preachers, however experienced, would do well to read, to digest—but certainly not swallow entire.

Études théologiques et religieuses, No. 3 of 1950, consists of a contribution by an eminent scholar in his own field: F. J. Leenhardt bravely raises and of course capably presents the question of the

relation between *Pédobaptisme catholique et Pédobaptisme réformé*, with special reference to the position of Calvin.

Early reference is made to Charles Hauter, who is quoted as affirming that between Catholicism and Protestantism lies a fundamental difference of understanding the *divine presence*. The Catholic view affirms and the Protestant denies that the divine presence is concrete and linked to the elements of this world. Out of this diversity emerges of course a difference of understanding of the Sacraments.

M. Leenhardt begins by admitting the obscurity and ambiguity of the Scriptural evidence for Infant Baptism, and goes on to trace, so far as the links are ascertainable, the process by which eventually Infant Baptism became the general norm for the practice of the Church. The remarkable fact is that "it is necessary to go to the third century to discover a certain proof of the existence of Infant Baptism—and this first evidence is hostile to the practice, which it combats as an unjustified novelty. No one in face of this can easily affirm that the Church has always baptised infants".

The study then moves to its own selected field. What is the relation of Calvin's doctrine to that held by the Roman Church? The course of thought in the early stages of the Christian Church is followed, and the crossroads is discovered which offered opportunity for an erroneous view of the meaning of Baptism to be chosen. It is, on the suggestion of Lundberg here quoted (*La Typologie baptismale en l'Ancien Église*), when the Cross is, as by Tertullian, represented as affecting the water of Baptism: "the magico-sacramental element is more accentuated and becomes in the sequel more and more predominant. . . . The water receives from the Cross a supernatural virtue."

In this view, Infant Baptism is readily seen to be theologically a possibility. Under stress of the development of thought, it rapidly becomes a necessity. All infants by their generation in concupiscence are involved in original sin. This involvement is construed in quasi-physical terms. It is therefore necessary that something quasi-physical, such as Baptism regarded as conveying virtue by the application of sacramental water, be supplied as remedy. "Baptism is declared operative in all cases, in virtue of the efficacy of the sanctified water, and the effect of Baptism is declared irresistible." From this source arises the care and diligence exercised by the Roman Church in seeing that Baptism be offered without fail and without delay to all infants. Hence too the insistence with which actual physical contact between baptised persons and the water is demanded, as for example in the rubrics prescribing procedure in cases of prenatal Baptism.

The question is then directly faced: Was Calvin in his baptismal theory catholic in outlook? The author finds that, though Infant Baptism is of course defended, it is not the same Baptism—not, that is, Baptism with the same meaning as those advocating the Catholic doctrine read into it. "The persistence of the rite of Infant Baptism does not suffice to show that Calvin conserved the sacred observance which from the days of the Apostles was diligently guarded by the faithful." Certain changes in emphasis are manifest. Cleansing, if it take place, is not local in object or in means. Whatever occurs in Baptism does not happen through the potency of Baptism, but through the "secret action of the Holy Spirit", of which the water becomes the sign but not the instrument. "Jesus Christ, not the water! The goodness of God towards men, not grace produced by the sacrament!" All is made to depend on the promises of God, on the Word without which nothing is effected. "Infants of Christian parents are not baptised to begin their Christian life, . . . but rather by this sign they are declared to be received by the Church as being already members of its Body."

Leenhardt declares categorically that "this criticism is radical: the Infant Baptism built by Calvin on the ruins of the traditional doctrine is a veritably new doctrine". This is strong language indeed.

The question then arises what value does this view conserve for Baptism. The answer of the writer is that Baptism retains a cognitive value. But it is not intellectual cognisance that is meant: "it is possible to establish an equivalence between recognition of Jesus Christ and the persuasion that He is our Saviour." The conclusion follows: "in the case of the child, it cannot be maintained that the Sacrament possesses the efficacy of the Word, since the sign is nothing for the infant who neither sees nor hears". If it be asked what profit there is in Baptism for the infant, Leenhardt avers that Calvin has no answer; or rather all he has to say is that the profit accrues to the parents. "For the rest, we are commanded to do this, and we are to obey. The Baptism of an infant cannot be accompanied by any effect. . . . It can only be the sign of a grace *already* accorded. . . . Calvin remained faithful to the fundamental exigencies of his doctrine, but this is accomplished only by sacrifice of the sacramental character of Baptism." "The visible sign is dissociated from the invisible grace, in a way which ruptures the unity of the Sacrament."

It is clear that this contribution to the study of Infant Baptism, and indeed of Baptism in general, raises the most serious questions, which merit longer discussion than is possible here. Three remarks may be made. (i) Let it be clearly understood that the declared

intention of the treatise is to discover the relation of Calvin's doctrine to the Catholic doctrine. The author holds that virtually a complete break has been made. There remains the question whether, in so departing from the traditional view, Calvin displaces it by one more in accordance with the New Testament. One would like to answer in the affirmative; but in fact, no quite satisfying answer can apparently be supplied by the article under review, because of the author's doubt whether the New Testament can be made to yield any clear guidance.

(ii) Doubt is raised in the reader's mind whether in fact justice has been done to Calvin's view of the phrase, recurrent in the Reformer's writings and of course in baptismal formularies of many Churches, "sign and seal". Is it not apparent that to reduce the value of Baptism to something merely cognitive is quite at variance with all that Calvin implies (and often expresses) by the term? One must bear in mind that for him sacramental sign is always a sign, not of something absent, but of something present. It may be a more controversial matter whether it is always a sign of something actually and thereby conveyed, though if the analogy of the Communion be admitted there can be little doubt that this is close to the Reformer's mind. But one would have thought it quite beyond controversy that by sign he means more than the cognitive symbol of something "*already*" conferred.

(iii) Does not the author himself, despite certain admirable expressions and quotations to the contrary, fall foul of the error of regarding grace in a quasi-physical or perhaps quasi-intellectual sense, and so render it easy for himself to dispose of its possible bestowal upon infants? If grace is nothing but Jesus Christ communicating Himself in His own way to His children, it is a risky procedure to deny categorically that there is real grace sacramentally conferred in Baptism even on infants. Weight must be allowed to the arguments of Cullmann and others, who affirm the close connexion of Baptism with circumcision, which evidently offers a permanent mark with which it is natural to co-ordinate a permanent grace. The application of this to Baptism would require the ascription of more than the transitory cognitive significance here assigned to Baptism.

But this article is a contribution, as one would expect, which must be reckoned with. And if it raises grave doubts, they are doubts which all Churches, deeply concerned as they are at present with the nature and administration of Baptism, will find it profitable to face.

The issue of *Études théologiques et religieuses* numbered 1 and 2 of 1951 offers contrasting treatment of an allied subject. Jean Cadier

addresses himself to an Exposition of La Doctrine Calviniste de la Sainte Cène. It would be difficult to overpraise this excellent study. The author divides his work into two parts. In the first he deals with the Theory of the Lord's Supper according to Calvin; the second he devotes to the Theory of the Lord's Supper according to Calvin's successors. The essay begins with a useful account of the texts in which Calvin's theory is expressed. They are many, and many of them are diffuse. But through them all "the thought of the Reformer possesses an admirable fixity and varies in substance very little in its successive expressions". What is affirmed in the *Institutes* is final and definitive. The only considerable variation is, when all is said, peripheral. In for example the *Articles* of 1537, there appears a certain preoccupation with the moral conditions attaching to proper participation in the Communion. "At this point", the author justly says, "practice has got the upper hand of theory."

In chapter 2 the Christological basis of the Calvinist doctrine is emphasised. Here a notable and valuable correction is made in the all too prevalent view of Calvin's theology as primarily and even exclusively theocratic. Chapter 3 is entitled "The Realism of Calvin". Its chief merit is to be found in the affirmation and explanation of the distinction between Calvin's use of the term *substantia* and the philosophical use employed in the Roman theory and frequently elsewhere. The fourth chapter shows that the presence of Christ in the Supper is not a local presence; the fifth expounds the meaning of Calvin's doctrine that the presence of Christ is in heaven. The sixth chapter finds the argument reaching its climax, when it is shown how it is through the operation of the Holy Spirit that the distance between Christ and His faithful is overcome and His life is imparted to them. The term "spiritual presence" is thus demonstrated to be quite compatible with "real presence"; and the objective and subjective aspects of the presence of Christ receive their definition with reference to the same Holy Spirit, by whom faith is created in the partaker. Christ offered and Christ received are by the same token distinguished. The next chapter deals with the Celebration of the Supper, and a final chapter in this part shows the opposition of the Calvinist view to the Mass.

The second part is devoted to outlining Calvinist thought as it is developed by Beza and Peter Martyr and through the controversies of the seventeenth century. The conclusion is sombre. The course of development shows how smoothly "the mystical standpoint of Calvin" is transformed into "the moral standpoint", with infinite loss of depth and calamitous practical results.

The whole has a bearing on the practice of the Church to-day,

and the author sees the Church of the Reformation recalled to a truer understanding and apprehension of its noble inheritance and a more frequent celebration of the Sacrament.

It is almost churlish to criticise so excellent and valuable a treatise. But it would have supplied a certain want if the author had asked himself concerning the relation of Calvin's doctrine of predestination and election to his affirmation that the virtue of the Communion is received by those in whom faith is awakened by the Holy Spirit. There is a certain incongruity here which is not easily resolved. The red thread of Predestination seems to traverse the whole scheme, as it were, diagonally, according to almost capricious laws of its own. It is not easy to see how the number or class of those to whom Christ's life is imparted in His Communion is coincident with those whom on the other principle of Predestination would appear to be marked out for its vivifying efficacy. One may perhaps regard this apparent disharmony as an added indication that this "terrible" doctrine is not so central to the Reformer's thought as has for long been supposed.

There are few people, scholarly or rank and file members of the Church, who would not greatly profit from reading this account of what the Holy Supper means.

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